

VICE PRESIDENTIAL CONTEST

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CAMPAIGN 1864

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# The 1864 Election

## Vice Presidential Contest

Excerpts from newspapers and other sources

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## THE PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN.

### Speech of Andrew Johnson at Nashville.

#### POSITION OF THE UNION CANDIDATE FOR THE VICE-PRESIDENCY.

A great Union meeting was held at Nashville, Tennessee, on Friday night, at which Governor Johnson was the principal speaker. We find the following report in the Nashville Times:—

"After thanking the assembly for the compliment they had bestowed on him, and a few other preliminary remarks, Governor Johnson proceeded to say that we are engaged in a great struggle for free government in the proper acceptance of the term.

"So far as the head of the ticket is concerned, the Baltimore Convention has said, not only to the United States, but to all the nations of the earth, that we are determined to maintain and carry out the principles of free government. [Applause.] That Convention announced and confirmed a principle not to be disregarded. It was that the right of secession and the power of a State to place itself out of the Union, are not recognized. The Convention had declared this principle by its action. Tennessee had been in rebellion against the Government, and waged a treasonable war against its authority just as other Southern States had done. She had seceded just as much as other States had, and left the Union as far as she had the power to do so. Nevertheless, the National Convention had declared that a State cannot put itself from under the National authority. It said by its first nomination, that the present President, take him altogether, was the man to steer the ship of state for the next four years. [Loud applause.]

"Next it said—if I may be permitted to speak of myself, not in the way of vanity, but to illustrate a principle—'We will go into one of the Rebellious States and choose a candidate for the Vice-Presidency.' Thus the Union party declared its belief that the rebellious States are still in the Union, and that their loyal citizens are still citizens of the United States. And now there is but one great work for us to do, that is to put down the rebellion. Our duty is to sustain the Government and help it with all our might to crush out a rebellion which is in violation of all that is right and sacred.

#### MR. JOHNSON ON HIS OWN POSITION.

"Governor Johnson said he had no impassioned appeal to make to the people in his own behalf. He had not sought the position assigned him by the National Convention. Not a man in all the land can truthfully say that I have asked him to use his influence in my behalf in that body, for the position allotted to me, or for any other. On the contrary, I have avoided the candidacy. But while I have not sought it, still, being conferred upon me unsought, I appreciate it the more highly. Being conferred on me without solicitation, I shall not decline it. [Applause.] Come weal or woe, success or defeat, sink or swim, survive or perish, I accept the nomination, on principle, be the consequences what they may. I will do what I believe to be my duty. I know there are those here who profess to feel a contempt for me, and I, on the other hand, feel my superiority to them.

#### HIS OPINION OF "ARISTOCRACY."

"I have always understood that there is a sort of exclusive aristocracy about Nashville which affects to contain all who are not within its little circle. Let them enjoy their opinions, I have heard it said that,

"'Worth makes the man, and want the fellow.'

"This aristocracy has been the bane of the slave States, nor has the North been wholly free from its curse. It is a class which I have always forced to respect me, for I have ever set it at defiance. The respect of the honest, intelligent and industrious class I have endeavored to win by my conduct as a man. One of the chief elements of this rebellion is the opposition of the slave aristocracy to being ruled by men who have risen from the ranks of the people.

"This aristocracy hated Mr. Lincoln because he was of humble origin, a rail splitter in early life. One of them, the private secretary of Howell Cobb, said to me one day, after a long conversation, 'We people of the South will not submit to be governed by a man who has come up from the ranks of the common people, as Abe Lincoln has.' He uttered the essential feeling and spirit of this Southern Rebellion. Now it has just occurred to me, also violently opposed to being governed by Mr. Lincoln, what in the name of conscience will it do with Lincoln and Johnson? [Great laughter.] I reject with scorn this whole idea of an arrogant aristocracy. I believe that man is capable of self-government, irrespective of his outward circumstances; and whether he be a laborer, a shoemaker, a tailor, or a grocer. The question is, whether man is capable of self-government. I hold with Jefferson that government was made for the convenience of man, and not man for the government. The laws and constitutions were designed as mere instruments to promote his welfare. And hence, from this principle, I conclude that governments can and ought to be changed and amended to conform to the wants, to the requirements and progress of the people, and the enlightened spirit of the age. [Loud applause.] Now if any of your Secessionists have lost faith in man's capability of self-government, and feel unfit for the exercise of this great right, go straight to Rebellion, take Jeff. Davis, Bragg and Bragg for your masters, and put their collars on your necks.

#### SLAVERY DEAD.

"And here let me say that now is the time to recur to these fundamental principles, while the land is rent with anarchy, and upheaved with the throes of a mighty revolution. While society is in this disordered state, and we are seeking security, let us fix the foundations of the Government on principles of eternal justice which will endure for all time. There is an element in our midst who are for perpetuating the institution of slavery. Let me say to you, Tennesseans and men from the Northern States, that slavery is dead. It was not murdered by me. I told you long ago what the result would be if you endeavored to go out of the Union to save slavery, and then the result would be bloodshed, rapine, devastated fields, plundered villages and cities; and, therefore, I urged you to remain in the Union. In trying to save slavery you killed it, and lost your own freedom. Your slavery is dead, but I did not murder it. As Macbeth said to Banquo's bloody ghost:

"'Never shake thy gory locks at me. Thou canst not say I did it.'

"Slavery is dead, and you must pardon me if I do not mourn over its dead body; you can bury it out of sight. In restoring the State, leave out that disturbing and dangerous element, and use only those parts of the machinery which will move in harmony."

#### WHY HE BELIEVES IN EMANCIPATION.

"Now, in regard to emancipation, I want to say to the blacks that liberty means liberty to work and enjoy the fruits of your labor. Idleness is not freedom. I desire that all men shall have a fair start and an equal chance in the race of life, and let him succeed who has the most merit. This, I think, is a principle of heaven. I am for emancipation for two reasons: first, because it is right in itself, and second, because in the emancipation of the slave we break down an odious and dangerous aristocracy. I think that we are treating more whites than blacks in Tennessee. I want to see Slavery broken up, and when its barriers are thrown down I want to see industrious, thrifty emigrants pouring in from all parts of the country. Come on! We need your labor, your skill, your capital. We want your enterprise and invention, so that hereafter Tennessee may rank with New England in the arts and mechanics, and that when we visit the Patent Office at Washington, where the ingenious mechanics of the free States have placed their models, we need not blush that Tennessee can show nothing but a mousetrap, or something of about as much importance. Come on! We greet you with a hearty welcome to the soil of Tennessee. Here is soil the most fertile in every agricultural product; a delightful and healthy climate, forests, water-power, and mines of inexhaustible rich-

ness; come and help us redeem Tennessee, and make her a powerful and flourishing State.

#### THE QUESTION OF RECONSTRUCTION.

"But in calling a Convention to restore the State, who shall restore and re-establish it. Shall the man who gave his influence and his means to destroy the Government? Is he to participate in the great work of re-organization? Shall he who brought this misery upon the State be permitted to control its destinies? If this be so, then all this precious blood of our brave soldiers and officers so freely poured out will have been wantonly spilled. All the glorious victories won by our noble armies will go for naught, and all the battlefields which have been sown with dead heroes during this Rebellion will have been made memorable in vain. Why all this carnage and devastation? It was that treason might be put down and traitors punished. Therefore I say that traitors should take a back seat in the work of restoration. If there be but five thousand men in Tennessee, loyal to the Constitution, loyal to free dom, loyal to justice, these true and faithful men should control the work of reorganization, and reformation absolutely. [Loud and prolonged applause.] I say that the traitor has ceased to be a citizen, and in joining the Rebellion, has become a public enemy. He forfeited his right to vote with loyal men, when he renounced his citizenship, and sought to destroy our Government.

"We say to the most honest and industrious foreigner who comes from England or Germany to dwell among us, and to add to the wealth of the country, 'Before you can be a citizen you must stay here for five years.' If we are so cautious about foreigners who voluntarily renounce their homes to live with us, what should we say to the traitor, who, although

born and reared among us, has raised a parricidal hand against the Government which always protected him? My judgment is that he should be subjected to a severe ordeal before he is restored to citizenship. A fellow who takes the oath merely to save his property, and denies the validity of the oath, is a perjured man, and not to be trusted. Before these repenting Rebels can be trusted, let them bring forth the fruits of repentance. He who helped to make all these widows and orphans, who drupe the streets of Nashville mourning, should suffer for his great crime.

#### THE REBEL LEADERS.

"The work is in our own hands. We can destroy this rebellion. With Grant thundering on the Potomac, before Richmond, and Sherman and Thomas on their march toward Atlanta, the day will ere long be ours. Will my madly persist in rebellion? Suppose that an equal number be slain in every battle, it is plain that the result must be the utter extermination of the Rebels. Ah, these Rebel leaders have a strong personal reason for holding out to save their necks from the halter. And these leaders must feel the power of the Government. Treason must be made odious, and traitors must be punished and impoverished. Their great plantations must be seized and divided into small farms, and sold to honest, industrious men.

#### ABUSES.

"The day for protecting the lands and negroes of these authors of rebellion is past. It is high time it was. I have been most deeply pained at some things which have come under my observation. We get men in command who, under the influence of illiteracy, lawless and careless, grant protection to the rich traitor, while the poor Union man stands cut in the cold, often unable to get a receipt or a voucher for his losses. [Cries of "That's so!" from all parts of the crowd.] The traitor can get lucrative contracts, while the loyal man is pushed aside, unable to obtain recognition of his just claims. I am telling the truth. I care nothing for a riped and shoulder-straps. I want them all to hear what I say. I have been on a gridiron for two years at the sight of these abuses. I blame not the Government for the wrongs, which are the work of weak or faithless subordinates. Wrongs will be committed under every form of Government and every Administration. For myself, I mean to stand by the Government till the flag of the Union shall wave over every city, town,

June 17  
1864

## VICE PRESIDENT HAMLIN ON THE NOMINATIONS.

In speaking of President Lincoln, Mr. Hamlin said, "there were no words which he could use that would increase him in their estimation. He had been re-nominated, and would be re-elected in obedience to the will of the people."

"Mr. Lincoln was a man of eminent abilities, and of rare and unsurpassed integrity, who will administer the government wisely and well, and bring the nation out of its present difficulties and plant it upon the eternal principles of liberty. He will certainly do no intentional wrong, and all his undivided efforts will be devoted unselfishly to his country's good. The fearful responsibility which has rested, and will continue to rest, upon him, is such as has been placed upon no other man. But under a good Providence he will sustain and discharge his responsibilities. Many had complained that the President had been too slow, while others had also complained that he had been too fast, or even rash in his acts. With a people like ours, active, restive and impatient, and unused to the scenes of war, he who would provoke no discussion or produce no division of opinion would be more than human. Amid the perils that had surrounded the ship of State, he had guided her with the hand of a skilful pilot, and would soon reach the quiet haven of peace. Elect him by your votes, as you will, and in the meantime give to him your earnest co-operation in the discharge of the duties that devolve upon him.

"In a Union organization, composed of men of all political organizations, it was deemed wisest and best to select a man who had been identified with the Democratic party, and the honored and incorruptible patriot, Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, was nominated for Vice President. He knew him well, and a purer patriot did not live in the land. He had been Governor of Tennessee, and had represented his State in the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States. From his long and varied experience in the councils of his country, and by his intellectual abilities and heroic patriotism, he was eminently fit to discharge the duties of President should he be called upon to do so. Amidst traitors in the Senate from his own section, he stood unmoved, true to the Union, and unconditionally loyal to his country.

"With us loyalty costs nothing. Not to be so was simply infamous. But to men who lived in the midst of treason and rebellion, and who literally took their lives in their hands for adhering to their country's flag, there was indeed much merit. Such was the position of Andrew Johnson; faithful he stood among the faithless. Separated from his home, driven from his State, his property seized and confiscated, his sons imprisoned and his wife and children driven to the mountains for the preservation of their lives, are some of the evidences which prove, beyond all doubt, the loyalty and patriotism of Andrew Johnson. He has given to the government his unflinching support of all the measures which have been adopted to crush out this rebellion.

"He long since saw, with the eye of a sagacious statesman, that slavery could not be left again to imperil the country's peace and safety, and has acted upon that conviction. He is every way eminently fitted and qualified for the position to which he has been nominated, and he will have our honest and earnest endorsement and support.

"Such are the men put in nomination by the Union organization for President and Vice President, worthy, personally, for their eminent ability and integrity, of your earnest and unqualified support, to carry out the great principles set forth in the resolutions of the Convention."

These utterances comport well with Mr. Hamlin's position, and, as they are the testimony of a man who certainly knows whereof he speaks, they will have influence out of the State in which they were uttered, as well as in it.

# LINCOLN DESIRED IT.

THAT IS THE REASON JOHNSON BEAT  
HAMLIN IN 1864.

The Martyr President Thought the  
Nomination of a Southern Man  
Would Help Restore the Union  
—Interesting History.

1851

PHILADELPHIA, July 6.—In a leading editorial entitled "Lincoln and Hamlin," the *Times* to-morrow will make the following important statement regarding the defeat of Hannibal Hamlin for the nomination for Vice-President in 1864:

"It is true that Hamlin, an entirely unobjectionable Vice-President and a leader with peculiar claims upon the Republican party, was rejected as Vice-President by the Republican convention of 1864 to place a Southern man in that office; and it is equally true that it would not and could not have been done had President Lincoln opposed it. So far from opposing it, Lincoln discreetly favored it, indeed, earnestly desired it. The writer hereof was a delegate-at-large from Pennsylvania in the Baltimore convention of 1864 and in response to an invitation from the President to visit Washington on the eve of the meeting of the body a conference was had in which Lincoln gravely urged the nomination of Johnson for Vice-President. It was solely in deference to Lincoln's earnest convictions as to the national and international necessities which demanded Johnson's nomination for the Vice-Presidency that the writer's vote was cast against Hamlin, and other Pennsylvania delegates were influenced to the same action by the confidential assurance of Lincoln's wishes.

"It should not be assumed that Lincoln was ambitious to play the role of political master or that he was perfidious to any. His position was not only one of the greatest delicacy in politics, but he was loaded with responsibilities to which all former Presidents had been strangers. His one supreme desire was the restoration of the Union, and he would gladly have surrendered his own high honor and even his life could he thereby have restored the dismembered States. The one great shadow that hung over him and his power was the sectional character of the ruling party and the Government. It weakened his arm to make peace; it strengthened European hospitality to the cause of the Union and it left the South without ever a silver lining to the dark cloud of subjugation. Lincoln firmly believed that the nomination of Johnson, an old Democratic Southern senator who had been aggressively loyal to the Union—and who was then the military Governor of his rebellious, but restored State—would not only desecularize the party and the Government, but would chill and curb the anti-Union sentiment of England and France, and inspire the friends of the Union in those countries to see a leading Southern statesman come in from a conquered insurgent State to the second office of the Republic. Such were Lincoln's sincere convictions and such his earnest arguments in favor of the nomination of Johnson in 1864, and but for Lincoln's convictions on the subject Hamlin would have been renominated and succeeded to the Presidency instead of Johnson. It is easy, in the clear light of the present, to say that the nomination of Johnson was a grave misfortune, and to speculate on the countless evils which could have been averted, but the one man who was most devoted to the endangered nation, and who could best judge of the sober necessities of the time, believed that it was not only wise but an imperative need to take a Vice-President from the South, and that is why Hannibal Hamlin was not renominated in 1864."

## LINCOLN WANTED JOHNSON, 1851

Editor Dana Confirms Colonel McClure's Statement.

NEW YORK, July 15.—Mr. Charles A. Dana, in an editorial in the *Sun*, says: "Colonel McClure, the distinguished editor of the *Philadelphia Times*, having stated that Mr. Lincoln had consulted him upon the nomination for Vice-President in 1864 and had expressed a preference for Andrew Johnson over Hannibal Hamlin as a candidate for that office, Mr. John G. Nicolay, formerly a private secretary of Mr. Lincoln, promptly retorted that the truth couldn't be so because he didn't know it, saying in substance, with a good deal of emphasis, that Colonel McClure is a liar. There is nothing in the facts to justify such an insult to one of our most distinguished journalists. To every person who knows Colonel McClure his word is evidence sufficient to establish any fact which he may certify to. It is impossible that he should be guilty of falsehood in such a case as this, or in any case; and if Mr. Nicolay is wise he will not long delay in offering the most ample apology for his offence.

"Mr. Lincoln was by no means a simple or a transparent character; and he was far enough from the crude, guileless and mushy philanthropist which some people imagine him to have been. To inform the world that he thought it advisable to have with him on the ticket a Southern candidate for Vice-President who had formerly been a Democrat, would have been folly such as he was never known to commit. He was not only a great statesman, but a great and shrewd and all-considering politician also. Nothing was further from his character or his habits than to blurt out before the public that which prudence required to be kept in privacy. We have no doubt that Mr. Nicolay quotes him correctly as refusing to take any open part against Hamlin's renomination. He would not make unnecessarily, or to any unnecessary person, any declaration of the sort.

"Yet there has never been a doubt in the mind of every practical man who was really behind the curtain in that tremendous period, that Lincoln looked carefully about for a man to succeed Hamlin. General Butler, General Dix, Andrew Johnson and, we dare say, two or three others were very earnestly considered by the President. Johnson, alone, united the chief requisites. He was a Southern man. He had been a Democrat. He was unquestionably on the side of the Union, and had made sacrifices in serving it. He was accordingly fixed upon, and the fact that he was finally nominated is proof ample and positive that he was not only preferred by Mr. Lincoln, but that this preference was frankly expressed to the very few from whom Lincoln concealed nothing that bore upon the subject."

### Lincoln and Hamlin.

The dispute between Mr. Nicolay and Col. McClure as to Lincoln's attitude concerning the Republican nomination for Vice President in 1864 is not of any particular importance. There is no historical necessity, that is to say, for discussing and adjusting such a question; but the chances are that Col. McClure is right, and that Hamlin was not renominated because Lincoln and other leaders of the party thought it would be good politics to give the place to Johnson as a Southern man and a conspicuous representative of the Union sentiment in the insurgent States. It is certain that no man would have been nominated for Vice President that year against Lincoln's wishes; and it is not reasonable to suppose that the matter was arranged without his participation. This does not imply that he had any objection to Hamlin, or any disposition to deal unfairly with him; it is entirely consistent with Mr. Nicolay's statement that "his personal feelings were for Hamlin's renomination." But the case was one in which he could not permit personal preference to outweigh public duty and political necessity. He was anxious to modify the sectional character of the Republican party, and to show to the people of this and other countries that the war was not being waged in a spirit of hatred or for the purpose of arbitrary and relentless subjugation. His one great desire was to restore the Union, and to allay the bitterness which the war had engendered; and to bring about that result he was ready to seize every political advantage, regardless of individual interests. That was his way from first to last, and it was a wise, practical and successful one. *G.D. 7-11-91*

There was at least a good sentimental reason for the selection of Johnson, and sentiment counted for a great deal at that time. He turned out to be a disappointment, it is true, and much trouble ensued on his account; but it is by no means certain that Lincoln would have escaped a similar conflict with Congress had his life been spared to the end of his term. Johnson's views upon the subject of reconstruction were very much like those which Lincoln had expressed in the way of intimations and suggestions, and the probability is that the former honestly sought to carry out the policy which he believed the latter would have adopted under the same circumstances. It is not likely that Lincoln would have asserted himself in the obstinate and dictatorial way that Johnson did, but he would inevitably have displeased the controlling element of his party by urging a conciliatory and magnanimous course towards the South. His great forgiving heart would not have cherished a spark of resentment against those who had tried to destroy the Union; and perhaps his judgment would not have been at its best in the matter by reason of this merciful tendency. He would surely have done his best to bring the seceding States back to "their proper practical relations," as he was in the habit of putting it, with the least possible injury to the feelings of the conquered element; and in so doing he would have provoked a storm

of criticism, notwithstanding his previous splendid services. The North was not in a mood for pity and clemency so soon after the terrible trials and sacrifices of the war, and could not have been persuaded even by Lincoln to take any risk of losing or cheapening the fruits of victory. And so, after all, it may have been best for his fame that he died before he was required to face such an emergency.

### THE DEAD STATESMAN.

THE PHILADELPHIA "TIMES" STORY DENIED.

WASHINGTON, July 7.—Col. Nicolay, who was one of President Lincoln's private secretaries, to-day sent a dispatch to Mrs. Hamlin stating that the editorial in this morning's Philadelphia *Times* to the effect that Lincoln was opposed to Mr. Hamlin's renomination as vice president in 1864 is entirely erroneous. The dispatch says that on the contrary Mr. Lincoln favored Mr. Hamlin's renomination, but withheld any expression of opinion for or against any candidate. Col. Nicolay also expresses the deepest sympathy for Mrs. Hamlin and the Nation's loss in Mr. Hamlin's death.

The family of the late Hon. Hannibal Hamlin endorse the statements of John G. Nicolay in his controversy with "Col." McClure, of the Philadelphia *Times*, over Presi-

dent Lincoln's desire for Hamlin's renomination as vice president in 1864. General Hamlin, the late vice president's son, has for years been collecting information in regard to his father's career, and, of course, has access to all of his private papers. This material will undoubtedly be used in the preparation of a biography of the deceased, and will throw much light on the history of the war period. It is not unlikely that there is written testimony bearing upon this very controversy among the late vice president's papers. General Hamlin was in Washington in intercourse with President Lincoln as well as with his father during the war, and he and all other members of the family have always firmly believed that Lincoln was in favor of the vice president's renomination. Mr. Nicolay's dispatch was, therefore, published with the full knowledge and consent of General Hamlin. The defeat of Hannibal Hamlin in 1864 is attributed to a senatorial combination which did not draw its inspiration from the White House. *Low & State "King" 1891*

THE PHILADELPHIA EDITOR REVEALS MORE POLITICAL HISTORY.

He Scores Private Secretary Nicolay and Reiterates That Lincoln Wanted Johnson Nominated in 1864—A Caustic Editorial.

PHILADELPHIA, July 8.—The following editorial of Colonel McClure will appear in tomorrow's Times:

The ignorance exhibited by John G. Nicolay in his public letter to the widow of ex-President Hamlin is equalled only by his arrogance in assuming to speak for Abraham Lincoln in matters about which Nicolay was never consulted and of which he had no more knowledge than any other routine clerk about the White House.

I do not regret that Mr. Nicolay has rushed into a dispute that must lead to the clear establishment of the exact truth as to the defeat of Hamlin in 1864. It will surely greatly impair, if not destroy, Nicolay's hitherto generally accepted claim to accuracy as the biographer of Lincoln, but he can complain of none but himself. I saw Abraham Lincoln at all hours of the day and night during his Presidential service, and he has himself abundantly testified to the trust that existed between us. Having had the direction of his battle in the pivotal State of the Union, he doubtless accorded me more credit than I merited, as the only success in politics and war is success; and the fact that I never sought or desired honors or profits from his administration and never embarrassed him with exactions of any kind made our relations the most grateful memories of my life.

In all of the many grave political emergencies arising from the new and often appalling duties imposed by internecine war I was one of those called to the danger councils of Abraham Lincoln. He distrusted his judgment in politics, and was ever careful to gather the best counsels from all the varied shades of opinion and interests to guide him in his conclusions; and there were not only scores of confidential conferences in the White House of which John G. Nicolay never heard, but no man ever met or heard of John G. Nicolay in such councils. He was a good mechanical routine clerk; he was utterly inefficient as the secretary of the President. His removal was earnestly pressed upon Lincoln on more than one occasion because of his utter want of tact and fitness for his trust, and only the proverbial kindness of Lincoln saved him from dismissal. He saw and knew President Lincoln; the man Abraham Lincoln he never saw and never knew; and his assumption that he was the trusted repository of Lincoln's confidential convictions and efforts would have been regarded as grotesque a quarter of a century ago, when Lincoln and his close surroundings were well understood. His biography of Lincoln is invaluable as an accurate history of the public acts of the Lincoln administration, but there is not a chapter or page on the inner personal attributes of the man that is not burdened with unpardonable errors. Nicolay was a precise, mechanical clerk, well fitted to preserve historical data and present it intelligently and correctly, but there his fitness as a biographer ended.

I now repeat that, in obedience to a telegraphic request from President Lincoln, I visited him at the White House the day before the Baltimore convention of 1864. At that interview Mr. Lincoln earnestly explained why the nomination of a well-known Southern man like Andrew Johnson, who had been Congressman, Governor and Senator by the favor of his State, would not only nationalize the Republican party and the Government, but would greatly lessen the grave peril of the recognition of the Confederacy by England and France. He believed that the election to the Vice-Presidency of a representative statesman from an insurgent State that had been restored to the Union would help the Republic abroad and remove the ties of sectionalism from the Government that seemed to greatly hinder peace. No intimation, no trace of prejudice against Mr. Hamlin was exhibited, and I well know that no such consideration could have influenced Mr. Lincoln in such an emergency. Had he believed Mr. Hamlin to be the man who could best promote the great work whose correction

his personal wishes; but he believed that a great public achievement would be attained by the election of Johnson, and I returned to Baltimore to work and vote for Johnson, although against all my personal predilections in the matter."

"Mr. Nicolay's public telegram to Mrs. Hamlin, saying that the foregoing statement 'is entirely erroneous,' is as insolent as it is false, and the correctness of my statement is not even inferentially contradicted by Nicolay's quotation from Lincoln. On the contrary Nicolay's statement given in his history (volume 9, pages 2-3 and copied in another column), proves simply that Nicolay was dress parading at Baltimore and knew nothing of the President's purposes. True, he seems to assume that he had responsible charge of the executive duties, as he says that 'Mr. Nicolay wrote a letter to Mr. Hay, who had been left in charge of the executive office,' asking whether Leonard Swett, one of the President's most intimate friends, was 'all right' in urging the nomination of Judge Advocate General Holt for Vice-President. Had Nicolay ever learned anything in the White House he would have known that of all living men Leonard Swett was the most trusted by Abraham Lincoln, and so should have known that when Swett was opposing Hamlin, Lincoln was not yearning for Hamlin's renomination.

"Then comes Lincoln's answer to Nicolay's bombastic query, saying 'Swett is unquestionably all right,' and because Lincoln did not proclaim himself a fool by giving Nicolay an opportunity to herald Lincoln's sacredly private convictions as to the Vice-Presidency, he assumes that he has Lincoln's 'written words' to justify his contradiction of a circumstantial statement and executed purpose, of which he could have had no knowledge. When Leonard Swett was against Hamlin none could escape the conclusion that opposition to Hamlin was no offence to Lincoln.

"I saw and conferred with Swett almost every hour of the period of the convention. We both labored to nominate Johnson and Swett made Holt, who was an impossible candidate, a mere foil to divide and conquer the supporters of Hamlin. Had Lincoln desired Hamlin's nomination Swett would have desired and labored for it, and Hamlin would have been renominated on the first ballot. The convention was a Lincoln body, pure and simple, and no man could have been put on the ticket with Lincoln who was not known to be his choice. It was not proclaimed, but it was in the air, and pretty much everybody but John G. Nicolay scented and bowed to it.

"Of the few men who enjoyed Lincoln's complete confidence Charles A. Dana, was conspicuous, and his statement, given in another column, is as credible testimony as could now be given on the subject. He was trusted by Lincoln in most delicate matters, political and military, and he logically tells of Johnson's selection by Lincoln for the Vice-Presidency in 1864.

"With Dana's direct corroboration of my statement, added to the strongly corroborated facts herein given, I may safely dismiss John G. Nicolay and the dispute his mingled ignorance and arrogance has thrust upon them. A. K. M."

McClure Contradicted.

CHICAGO, July 8.—Burton C. Cook of Chicago, who was chairman of the Illinois delegation in the Republican convention of 1864, and who nominated Lincoln in that convention, declared this evening that the statement that Lincoln favored Hannibal Hamlin for the Vice-Presidency is correct. Mr. Cook says: "Although Mr. Lincoln had not told me directly, he had given me so to understand. The fact is further proved by the action of the entire Illinois delegation, which was a unit for Mr. Hamlin, understanding that we were at Mr. Lincoln's service in the matter."

Mr. Cook attributes the selection of Andrew Johnson by the convention in the place of Hamlin to the eloquence of Horace Maynard, who pathetically described the sufferings of the people of the South and brilliantly advocated the expediency of choosing Johnson.

uly 12  
1891

## "SPANKED AND DISMISSED."

Col. McClure of the Philadelphia Times Again Replies Savagely to Col. Nicolay,

In the Controversy Over the Convention of 1864—Col. Nicolay Mildly Answers.

Prohibition in Iowa Discussed by the Western Prohibition Conference at Lake Bluff.

An Evident Split in the Southern Farmers Alliance—South Dakota Alliance Matters—The Christian Endeavor Convention.

### LINCOLN AND HAMLIN.

COL. M'CLURE'S FINALE TO COL. NICOLAY.

PHILADELPHIA, July 11.—The Times this morning publishes an editorial addressed to John G. Nicolay under the caption, "Spanked and Dismissed." It is in part: "Had you known anything about the inside political movements in the White House in '64, you would have known that my letter to Lincoln, quoted in your defense, was written because of a suddenly developed movement in this state to divide the lines drawn by the then bitter Cameron and Curtin factional war for and against Lincoln. Cameron followers claimed to be the special supporters of Lincoln and attempted to drive Curtin and the state administration into hostility to the president. My justly assumed devotion to Cameron was a pretext for declaring me as either restrained in my support of Lincoln or likely to be in opposition. The moment I saw the statement in print I wrote the letter you quote to dismiss from Lincoln's mind anything about either open or passive opposition from Curtin's friends. Equally, indeed even more flagrantly, false is your statement of only a minor truth about the action of the Pennsylvania delegation at Baltimore in 1864. You say Cameron cast the solid vote of the state for Hamlin. Had you desired to be truthful you would have added that Cameron cast the solid vote for Johnson before the close of the first ballot. Had you sought the truth as an honest biographer, you could have obtained it without offensive dissimulation, not only from me as far as I knew, but from such living witnesses as Chas. A. Dana and Murat Halstead, and from the record of the testimony of Gen. Cameron, Col. Roney and others, who knew much of Lincoln and but little of you. Instead of seeking the truth you flung your ignorance and egotism with ostentatious indecency upon the bereaved household of the yet untombed Hamlin, and when brought to bay by those better informed than yourself you resented in the tone and terms of the ward heeler in the wharf rat district battling for constabulary honors. I think it safe to say the public judgment will be that it would have been well for both Lincoln's memory and for the country had such a biographer been drowned when a pup. Dismissed."

### COL. NICOLAY COMES AGAIN.

WASHINGTON, July 11.—Col. Nicolay is out with a reply to the latest communication from Col. McClure. He says he will not allow Mr. McClure to retreat in a cloud of vituperation, reiterates his previous assertion as to McClure's misstatements, and goes over the ground again to prove his position. He quotes a dispatch from B. C. Cook, who was chairman of the

Illinois delegation at the Baltimore convention, and who says Nicolay's statement that Lincoln was in favor of Hamlin was correct. Cook further says after the receipt of the note which Nicolay has quoted in previous statements. After the interview with him, Cook was positive that Hannibal Hamlin was Lincoln's favorite, and says the fact is further proven by the action of the entire Illinois delegation, which was a unit for Hamlin. Nicolay goes on to say that if McClure received Lincoln's instructions to vote for Johnson, he betrayed them when he went back to Baltimore, and as a member of the Pennsylvania delegation cast a vote for Hannibal Hamlin.

## Interesting Talk with Stanton's Private Secretary.

His Reasons for Believing That Lincoln Did Not Favor Johnson's Nomination—Stanton's Secret Telegraph Service—An Untold Bit of War History.

[From the New York Post.]

WASHINGTON, D. C., July 14.—Maj. Albert E. H. Johnson, of Johnson & Johnson, patent attorneys, one of the most prominent firms in the profession here, held during the civil war the delicate and responsible position of confidential clerk to Secretary Edwin M. Stanton. When asked last evening whether he could throw any new light upon the controversy over President Lincoln's attitude towards the renomination of Hannibal Hamlin for Vice President in 1864 he answered:

"To my mind the most significant contribution to the discussion of this question is the letter from Mr. Charles A. Tinker, of New York, printed in the *Sun* of that city. You may recall a single passage: 'It happened that when the message announcing the nomination of Andrew Johnson for Vice President was received Mr. Lincoln was in the office. He read it carefully and soliloquized aloud: "Well, I thought possibly he might be the man. Perhaps he is the best man, but—" and rising from his chair, passed out.' Now, it seems to me if ever there was a volume wrapped up in a single word—a volume of prophecy, a volume of history yet to be unfolded and yet to be written—it was in that word "but—" as Mr. Lincoln uttered it. Nobody can finish that sentence by authority, for its author himself never finished it; yet, if we take what we know to have been his estimate of Mr. Johnson personally, and if we reflect that Mr. Lincoln had often shown, intertwined with his wonderful traits as a statesman and popular leader, something of the gift of a seer, we can not help giving to the word, and to the abrupt pause which followed it, a world of meaning."

"Mr. Lincoln had no doubt of Johnson's loyalty?" I asked.

"Perhaps."

"Mr. Lincoln believed that Johnson was a patriot; a lover of the Union; a brave man, possessed of great force of character; a man who would, under more favorable conditions of early training and later circumstance, have made a brilliant mark in history. "But—" I tell you that summing up of Johnson's virtues in this hesitating phrase, "Perhaps he is the best man," followed by that precipitous closing, "but—" has always made me feel that Mr. Lincoln, by some special dispensation, had spread before his mental vision as in a flash the checkered panorama of the next four years; that he felt already a foreboding of his own departure and of what was destined to follow; of Johnson's quarrel with the party which elected them both; of his reconstruction policy and the wreck it made of all his former pledges; of the occupation of the White House, as boon companions of the President, by a horde of men lately in rebellion against the Government; of the undignified and demoralizing struggle between President and Congress; of the impeachment trial, with all its disgraceful incidents; of the general amnesty which restored repentant and unrepentant foes of the Union alike to the full privileges of citizenship, and impeded the work of reconstruction in the South. Do you wonder that he began his commentary with a "perhaps," and ended it with a "but—"?"

"You accept Mr. Tinker's recollection of this incident as unquestionable?"

"Certainly, and for this very good reason: Mr. Tinker was a telegraph operator in the room adjoining the office occupied by Secretary Stanton and myself. The door had scarcely closed upon the President on the occasion referred to when Mr. Tinker came in and told me the entire story, just as he has now told it in print. I remember it as if it were yesterday."

NOT FOR EFFECT.

"And you are quite sure Mr. Lincoln's remark was not made merely for effect upon those who heard him?"

"There is no reason in the world to suspect such a thing. Knowing him as I did, seeing him every day for years and often several times in a day, coming into so close contact with him that he was accustomed to call me familiarly by my first name, I could hardly be very far out in my estimate of that one trait in his character—the trait of candor—what-ever else I might have been deceived about."

never spoken, guileless man I never saw and never expect to see again. Yet, to accept the version of the Hamlin affair which Col. McClure has given to the world would be to stamp him as a double-face, a schemer, a politician in the smallest sense of the term. Nothing was farther from his nature, to begin with; and, without intending any disparagement of his brilliant gifts, I may add that he could not have engineered a secret campaign such as he is credited with, because he positively hadn't the capacity for it. Why, intimate as he and Mr. Stanton were, the full confidence was only on one side. Mr. Lincoln used to tell Mr. Stanton everything, because he knew the Secretary was shrewd, hard-headed, close-mouthed. Mr. Stanton, on the other hand, didn't dare to tell Mr. Lincoln even the telegraphic secrets which he wasn't willing all the world should know, because Mr. Lincoln was too ready to speak of these matters to friends whom he might meet at the moment."

"You refer to telegraphic secrets? Had Mr. Stanton access to any which did not immediately concern his own department?"

STANTON'S THEORY.

"My dear sir, Mr. Stanton's theory was that everything concerned his own department. It was he who was carrying on the war. It was he who would be held responsible for the most machinations of the enemy in the rear as well as the unwarranted successes of the enemy in front. Hence he established a system of military censorship which has never, for vastness of scope or completeness of detail, been equalled in any war before or since or in any other country under the sun. The whole telegraphic system of the United States, with its infinite ramifications, centered in his office. There, adjoining his own personal room sat Gen. Eckert, Hymer D. Bates, Albert B. Chandler and Charles A. Tinker—all of them young men of brilliant promise and now shining lights in the electrical world. Every hour in the day and night, under all circumstances, in all seasons, there sat at their instruments sundry members of this little group. The passage between their room and the Secretary's was unobstructed. It was an interior communication—they did not have even to go through the corridor to reach him, and every dispatch relating to the war or party politics that passed over the Western Union wires, North or South, they read."

"Did they report them all to the Secretary?"

"Every one which appeared to have the slightest significance. In case they were at all in doubt as to the character of one they gave him the benefit of the doubt and showed it to him. Cipher telegrams were considered especially suspicious, so every one of those was reported. The young men I have mentioned were masters of cipher-translation. Every message to or from the President or any member of his household passed under the eye of the Secretary. If one Cabinet Minister communicated with another over the wire by a secret code Mr. Stanton had the message deciphered and read to him. If Gen. McClellan telegraphed to his wife from the front, Mr. Stanton knew the contents of every dispatch. Hence, as far as the conduct of the war was concerned, Mr. Stanton knew a thousand secrets where Mr. Lincoln knew one; for the Secretary's instructions were that telegrams indiscriminately should not be shown to the President. But all this is wandering from the subject."

HE KNEW EVERYTHING.

"It is only leading around to it by an indirect but very sure path, Maj. Johnson. What I wanted to find out was whether Mr. Stanton was in possession of all that passed over the wires about the time of the Baltimore Convention of 1864."

"Every word—every word. Not only were the telegraphers here required to report it all to the Secretary, but similar instructions were issued to those in Baltimore, so that there was not a sentence passing into Baltimore or out of it concerning the secret machinations of that Convention, either in plain script or in cipher, of which Mr. Stanton was not master."

"And you know what these dispatches contained?"

"Certainly. I could not have helped it if I had wanted to in the position which I then occupied."

"What was Mr. Stanton's preference for a ticket in 1864?"

"My recollection is that he favored the renomination of the old ticket. At all events, he wanted Lincoln to run again, and with a man of a very different sort from what he regarded Johnson to be. I believe he was suspicious of Johnson from the very outset. Although a Democrat himself—indeed, perhaps for that very reason—he had an intense feeling of doubt regarding every Democrat and every Southerner, which it required a great deal of favorable evidence to shake. He believed the whole Southern people to be untrustworthy at that crisis of national affairs. The first duty before the Administration, in his judgment, was to subdue the South, and that was a task of which he could not confide even a share to a single Southern man. As I have already stated, the relations between the President and himself were such that if Mr. Lincoln had harbored a desire for Johnson's nomination he could not have failed to give Mr. Stanton an inkling of it; and if Mr. Stanton had received a hint of that sort he would have put in his protest in

of it."

"You speak of the intimacy of relations between the two men. The impression is pretty widespread that they had a hard time getting on together."

RELATIONS OF LINCOLN AND STANTON.

"Well, that is partly true and partly false. The bond between Mr. Lincoln and Mr. Stanton was a curious case of the mutual attraction of opposites. No two men were ever more utterly and irreconcilably unlike; yet no two men ever did or could work better in harness. They supplemented each other's nature, and they fully recognized the fact that they were a necessity to each other. The secretiveness which Lincoln wholly lacked Stanton had in a marked degree; the charity which Stanton could not feel coursed from every pore in Lincoln. Lincoln was for giving a wayward subordinate seventy times seven chances to repair his errors; Stanton was for either forcing him to obey or cutting off his head without more ado. Lincoln was as calm and unruffled as the summer sea in moments of the gravest peril; Stanton would lash himself into a fury over the same condition of things. Stanton would take hardships with a groan; Lincoln would find a funny story to fit them. Stanton was all dignity and sternness, Lincoln all simplicity and good nature. Yet no two men ever appreciated each other more thoroughly. Mr. Stanton would rave over Mr. Lincoln's easy-going ways, fully conscious that every word he uttered might be conveyed to the President by some officious busybody who overheard it; Mr. Lincoln would let the tales pass over his head with a smile, and perhaps go across to the Secretary's office within five minutes for another confidential chat."

"Mr. Stanton had some substantial grounds for a grievance against the President, had he not?"

THE WAR SECRETARY'S GRIEVANCES.

"Yes—or, at least, he thought he had, which amounted to the same thing. It was a constant thorn in his side, as in that of so many others, that Mr. Lincoln should insist on standing by Gen. McClellan as he did, in spite of McClellan's persistent disregard of orders from Washington to engage Lee in battle. If Stanton had been President he would have made short work with McClellan, and he used to writhle under Mr. Lincoln's way of doing things. I remember one occasion when I think Mr. Lincoln pretty nearly broke the Secretary's heart. It was at the time of Pope's bad disaster. McClellan was still nominally in command of the Army of the Potomac, though all his troops had been sent over to Pope. I am going to give you now, by the by, a bit of history which I believe has never been written before. Lincoln had reached a point where even he could stand the pressure no longer; and he had actually signed a paper, written in his own hand, in Mr. Stanton's room, to be published to the country, setting forth the reasons why Gen. McClellan should not again have a command; but the next morning, seized with a sudden inspiration, he changed front, and conveyed to Gen. Halleck his desire to have Gen. McClellan restored to duty instantly as commander of the Army of the Potomac. This was a crushing blow to Mr. Stanton. He was in the condition of a drooping leaf. He had little or nothing to say that whole day, but brooded over the President's order all the time. Yet the sequel proved that the President was right. McClellan took command of the Army of the Potomac, which had then become a rabble and alarmed everybody; and the first fruit of his restoration was the battle of Antietam, which, though technically a draw, gave the Union cause a decided impetus and advantage."

HE APPRECIATED IT.

"Did Mr. Stanton himself appreciate the wisdom of this move finally?"

"Oh, yes, he recognized and admired the genius of foresight which the President displayed on more than one occasion like this, when the prospects were blackest. He also realized and appreciated, I believe, Lincoln's magnanimity toward himself. The two men gave each other the full measure of appreciation, I can assure you. If such a feeling had not existed there would have been abundant occasions for a rupture. Mr. Stanton, though not a party to the cabal which proposed to thrust Mr. Lincoln aside at the end of his first term, was knowing to it; and it made him very angry."

"Did Mr. Lincoln appear to feel any special interest in the outcome of the Convention?"

"Not much. If appearances counted for anything, his thoughts as well as his hands were kept entirely off the Convention. I think he was perfectly convinced that he would be chosen to run again. Mr. Stanton showed a great deal keener interest in the whole business than the President did. Not only did he take the precautions I mentioned a few minutes ago, enabling him to read the secret telegraphic history of the Convention, but I remember his instructing me to get the Baltimore newspapers for him every day while the session lasted. Mr. Lincoln neither sent nor received a dispatch, and seemed generally as indifferent as if the affair were all some one's else and not his own."

"Have you any reason to suppose that the idea of a Southern man for second place on the ticket had found favor in his eyes, even if he had not personally suggested it?"

"Not the least. Why should it? Who was to be favorably affected by putting a Southern man on the ticket? Not the North, certainly; for the Unionists up there were perfectly satisfied to have one of their own kind for a Vice President. Not the South, for the only sort of man who would have been satisfactory there would have been a temporizer and a conciliator—one of the type which no Republican Convention of that day would have touched with a forty-foot pole. Not Europe, for both England and France had by that time become convinced of the immensely superior power of the North; and so long as the South had refused, as a condition of diplomatic recognition, to abolish slavery, they were perfectly willing to see the war pushed to a conclusion on strictly sectional lines. Who else was there to influence by this show of desertion-alizing the dominant party or the Administration? Nobody. And to accuse Mr. Lincoln, the most farseeing, philosophic statesman of his time, of proposing such a policy, is to throw discredit on his honesty as well as his intelligence. Still, after all is said, I cling to my view that Mr. Tinker's reminiscence is the most striking contribution to the literature of this controversy. And it would be, in my judgment, impossible to find anywhere a more convincing proof that Mr. Lincoln was neither the author nor the abettor of the Johnson nomination than that uncompleted sentence as it fell from his lips, drawn forth by the sudden news from Baltimore: 'Perhaps he is the best man, but —'."

Ed. Lawrence Daily Globe

7/17/71

### LINCOLN'S DUPLICITY.

No one who understands American politics and the character of ABRAHAM LINCOLN as an American politician has ever doubted Colonel McCLEURE's assertion that ANDREW JOHNSON was put on the Republican ticket in 1864 by LINCOLN's direction. It seems strange that a fact so nearly self-evident should have been challenged as it, even though it must be concluded from it that LINCOLN played fast and loose with HAMLIN. But the fact having been challenged on the ground that it imputes duplicity to Mr. LINCOLN—as, indeed, it does convict him of it—Colonel McCLEURE makes his case good by documentary evidence which he has kindly furnished to THE REPUBLIC for publication to-day contemporaneously with its appearance in his own excellent paper, the Philadelphia Times. Included with these documents are letters from Hon. S. NEWTON PETTIS and from Mr. HAMLIN himself, bearing directly on the point. As one of Mr. LINCOLN's supporters and managers in the campaign of 1864, Judge PETTIS called on him for instructions on the morning of the Baltimore convention. "I called especially to ask him whom he desired to put on the ticket with him as Vice-President," writes Judge PETTIS. "He leaned forward and in a low but distinct voice said, 'Governor JOHNSON of Tennessee.'" *Rep. ed. 8.5.91*

Along with much other testimony supporting this is a letter written by Mr. HAMLIN to Judge PETTIS in 1889, in which he says: "Mr. L— (LINCOLN) evidently became somewhat alarmed about his re-election and changed his position. That is all I care to say. If we ever meet again I may say something more to you. I will write no more."

So here in Mr. HAMLIN is the same shrewdness illustrated in Mr. LINCOLN's character, a shrewdness which in him prevents him from putting on paper for a friend what he would be willing to say in conversation. If simplicity is the singleness of character, which is "without folds" to conceal its purposes, there is little of it in practical politics or politicians. The "double folding" concealment which the word "duplicity" is used to express is the rule of every politician who pushes himself to the front.

With many admirable traits, chief among which was almost complete freedom from bigotry, Mr. LINCOLN was a very shrewd politician. In 1864 he believed, as was natural, that the welfare of the country required his own re-election; and, so believing, he naturally made it the chief consideration. It does not appear that he made Mr. HAMLIN any promises of support. He was probably too shrewd to do anything of the kind. He left him under an impression and did not undeceive him, "since to have done so would have been to risk alienating him and his friends. So going into convention confident of LINCOLN's support, Mr. HAMLIN found himself unexpectedly "dumped." This was shrewd politics. To have managed it otherwise would have been "poor politics." Some things are done now as they were then in every convention from the county meeting to the national gathering. In all this Mr. LINCOLN had served a long apprenticeship, and had become thoroughly versed in it. The indications of "practical politics" were a second nature to him. This must be considered if even an approximately correct judgment is to be formed of a character which in its weaknesses or excellences was

remarkably complex. Most, if not all, of LINCOLN's most admirable qualities may be traced to his sense of his own infirmities; while all that is least admirable comes with equal certainty from his keen insight into the weaknesses of others. This is the "double-ness" of character in him which explains his duplicity in dealing with others as it explains him in what is best in him.

# LINCOLN AND HAMLIN

Lincoln's Support of Johnson for Vice President.

HANNIBAL HAMLIN ADMITS IT

His Letter to Judge Pettis is Conclusive on the Point.

BUTLER AND CAMERON TESTIFY

Judge Pettis, George Jones, Johnson's Secretary Truman, Secretary Welles, Governor Stone and Colonel Forney Are Positive Witnesses and General Sickles Confirms Them.

The statement recently made by THE TIMES, that President Lincoln had favored the nomination of Andrew Johnson over Hannibal Hamlin for Vice President in 1864, having been disputed, we deem it a public duty to settle the issue by the direct testimony of the men now living, or the preserved direct testimony of the dead, who were in the confidence of Mr. Lincoln and acted in accord with his convictions of public duty.

The following letters and authentic statements from prominent actors in the nominations of 1864, will be generally accepted as conclusive. The almost united expression of the public press of the country has already ended reasonable disputation on the subject; but it is due to history that the clearest and best evidence shall be given, and that duty is now performed. When Mr. Hamlin, himself, confesses the correctness of the statement of THE TIMES, the folly of controversy on the question will be appreciated by all.

## LINCOLN ADVISES JUDGE PETTIS.

He Urged Johnson for Vice President. Pettis Informs Hamlin in 1889—Hamlin's Letter.

Hon. S. Newton Pettis, who was an active supporter of Lincoln at the Conventions of 1860 and 1864, and who has been Congressman, Judge and Foreign Minister, was personally advised by Lincoln in 1864 to support Johnson for Vice President. The following is his testimony on the point:

MEADVILLE, July 20, 1891.

Hon. A. K. McCURE.

DEAR SIR: Your favor of last week reached me at Washington, asking for a copy of Mr. Hamlin's letter to me in 1839, and instead of a copy I enclose the original, which you can return to me at your convenience.

You will remember the circumstances connected with it, for we spoke about it shortly after. On the morning of the meeting of the Baltimore Convention in 1854, which nominated Mr. Lincoln, and immediately before leaving for Baltimore, I called upon Mr. Lincoln in his study and stated that I called especially to ask him whom he desired put on the ticket with him as Vice President. He leaned forward and in a low but distinct tone of voice said, "Governor Johnson, of Tennessee."

In March, 1889, I spent an hour with Mr. Hamlin in Washington at the house of a friend with whom he was stopping while attending the Inauguration of President Harrison in March of that year.

Among other matters I casually mentioned the expression of Mr. Lincoln the morning of the meeting of the Baltimore Convention in 1864, not supposing for a moment that it was anything that would surprise him. You can imagine my annoyance at the remark that it called out from Mr. Hamlin, which was: "Judge Pettis, I am sorry you told me

that." I regretted having made the statement, but I could not recall it.

Later in the year I noticed a published interview had with you in which you had made substantially the same statement from Mr. Lincoln to you very shortly before the meeting of the convention, which I clipped and with satisfaction enclosed to Mr. Hamlin in verification of mine to Mr. L., stating that your statement to the same effect as mine made to him in the March before had relieved me from fear that he, Mr. Hamlin, might have sometimes questioned the accuracy of my memory, and the letter I now send you was Mr. Hamlin's reply.

*From Very Truly  
S. Newton Pettis*

## HAMLIN'S LETTER TO PETTIS.

He Admits That Lincoln Supported Johnson and Regrets to Confess It.

The following is Mr. Hamlin's letter to Judge Pettis, the original of which is now in our possession:

BANGOR, September 13, 1889.

MY DEAR SIR: Have been from home for several days, and did not get your letter and newspaper slip until last evening. Hence the delay in my reply.

When I met and conferred with you in Washington, and you told me of your interview with Mr. L. (Lincoln), I had not the slightest doubt of your correctness. The remark that I made was caused wholly because you made certain statements of Mr. L. which I had seen, but which I did not believe until made positive by you. I was really sorry to be misinformed. Hence I was truly sorry at what you said and the information you gave me.

Mr. L. (Lincoln) evidently became some alarmed about his re-election and changed his position. That is all I care to say. If we ever shall meet again I may say something more to you. I will write no more.

*Yours Very Truly  
H. W. Hamlin*

Hon. S. N. Pettis, Meadville, Pa.

## LINCOLN, CAMERON AND BUTLER

Lincoln Wanted a War Democrat for Vice President in March, 1864—Cameron's Mission to Butler—Butler Declines and Lincoln and Cameron Agree on Johnson.

The following letter from General Butler, with the added extract from his magazine article on the same subject, explain themselves:

Boston, July 14, 1891.

MY DEAR SIR: A few years ago I was asked to write, as my memory serves me, for the North American Review while under the editorial management of Mr. Allen Thorndike Rice, my reminiscences of the facts in relation to the interview between Mr. Cameron and myself, which took place at Fort Monroe some time in March, 1864, as I remember. It might have been a little later, but it must have been before the 4th day of May, 1864, because I went into the field on that date and did not see Mr. Cameron during the campaign. My recollection is that the article was entitled, "Vice Presidential Politics in 1864." I should say that the article was written five or six years ago.

I cannot now add anything that I know of to what I said then. I meant to tell it just as it lay in my memory, and certainly did so, wholly without any relation to Mr. Hamlin, because I understood it had been determined on by Mr. Lincoln and his friends that somebody else, if it were possible, should be nominated instead of Mr. Hamlin. Of the reasons of that determination I made no inquiry because the whole matter was one in which I had no intention to take any part. Yours truly,

*Butler to S. N. Pettis*

## A LATER CAMERON INTERVIEW

How and When Lincoln Decided to Prefer Johnson for Vice President.

The following interview with General Cameron, taken by Colonel Burr a few years before his death, was carefully revised by Cameron himself. It is not only a repetition of General Butler's statement, but it tells how, after Butler declined the Vice Presidency, Lincoln carefully considered other prominent War Democrats and finally agreed with Cameron to nominate Johnson:

I had been summoned from Harrisburg by the President to consult with him in relation to the approaching campaign," said General Cameron. "He was holding a reception when I arrived, but after it was over we had a long and earnest conversation. Mr. Lincoln had been much distressed at the intrigues in and out of his Cabinet to defeat his renomination; but that was now assured and the question of a man for the second place on the ticket was freely and earnestly discussed. Mr. Lincoln thought and so did I that Mr. Hamlin's position during the four years of his administration made it advisable to have a new name substituted. Several men were freely talked of, but without conclusion as to any particular person. Not long after that I was requested to come to the White House again. I went and the subject was again brought up by the President, and the result of our conversation was that Mr. Lincoln asked me to go to Fortress Monroe and ask General Butler if he would be willing to run and, if not, to confer with him upon the subject.

General Butler positively declined to consider the subject, saying that he preferred to remain in the military service, and he thought a man could not justify himself in leaving the army in the time of war to run for a political office. The General and myself then talked the matter over freely, and it is my opinion at this distance from the event that he suggested that a Southern man should be given the place. After completing the duty assigned by the President I returned to Washington and reported the result to Mr. Lincoln. He seemed to regret General Butler's decision, and afterwards the name of Andrew Johnson was suggested and accepted. In my judgment Mr. Hamlin never had a serious chance to become the Vice Presidential candidate after Mr. Lincoln's renomination was assured.

## JOHNSON'S SECRETARY SPEAKS

His Positive Knowledge That Lincoln Desired Johnson's Nomination.

Major Benjamin C. Truman, a well-known Eastern journalist, and now manager of the California exhibit for the coming Chicago Fair, testifies in the following conclusive manner on the subject:

CHICAGO, July 25.

MY DEAR MR. McCURE:

We met in New Orleans the year of the fair, as you may remember. I am the man recently quoted in the Tribune in relation to the Lincoln-Hamlin controversy, but I did not wish to volunteer conspicuously in the dispute. I was private secretary of Andrew Johnson in Nashville in 1864. I saw and handled all his correspondence during that time, and I know it to be a fact that Mr. Lincoln desired the nomination of Johnson for Vice President, and that Brownlow and Maynard went to Baltimore at request of Lincoln and Johnson to promote the nomination.

Forney wrote to Johnson saying that General Sickles would be in Tennessee to canvass Johnson's availability, and that Lincoln, c the whole, preferred Johnson first and Holt next. I do not know that General Sickles conferred with Johnson on the subject, and it is possible that General Sickles was not advised by Lincoln at the time he sent him on the secret mission what he had in view, for Lincoln may at that time have been undecided in his own mind. It is certain, however, that after General Sickles returned and reported to Lincoln, Lincoln decided to favor the nomination of Johnson.

I went out to Tennessee with Johnson in March, 1862, and had charge of his official and private correspondence for four years. I wrote at his dictation many letters to Mr. Lincoln, and was cognizant of all Mr. Lincoln's communications to him.

When he was made Military Governor and Brigadier General, I was appointed on his staff along with William A. Browning, of Baltimore, who died in '66. It was Colonel

Forney who obtained the position for me, and he was in close confidential relations with Johnson during the entire period I speak of.

*Very Truly  
Ben. E. Johnson*

#### General Butler's Statement in Magazine.

From the North American Review for October, 1885.

Within three weeks afterward a gentleman (Cameron) who stood very high in Mr. Lincoln's confidence came to meet Fort Monroe. This was after I had heard that Grant had allotted to me a not unimportant part in the coming campaign around Richmond, of the results of which I had the highest hope, and for which I had been laboring, and the story of which has not yet been told, but may be hereafter.

The gentleman informed me that he came from Mr. Lincoln; this was said with directness, because the messenger and myself had been for a considerable time in quite warm, friendly relations, and I owed much to him, which I can never repay save with gratitude.

He said: "The President, as you know, intends to be a candidate for re-election, and as his friends indicate that Mr. Hamlin is no longer to be a candidate for Vice President, and as he is from New England, the President thinks that his place should be filled by someone from that section; and aside from reasons of personal friendship which would make it pleasant to have you with him, he believes that being the first prominent Democrat who volunteered for the war, your candidature would add strength to the ticket, especially with the war Democrats, and he hopes that you will allow your friends to co-operate with his to place you in that position."

I answered: "Please say to Mr. Lincoln that while I appreciate with the fullest sensibility this act of friendship and the compliment he pays me, yet I must decline. Tell him," I said laughingly, "with the prospects of the campaign, I would not quit the field to be Vice President, even with himself as President, unless he will give me bond with sureties, in the full sum of his four years' salary, that he will die or resign within three months after his inauguration."

#### CAMERON'S DECLARATIONS.

Lincoln and Cameron Agreed Upon Johnson After Butler Declined.

The following is an extract from an interview with General Cameron taken by James R. Young, now Executive Clerk of the State, in 1873, revised by Cameron himself and published in the New York Herald in the summer of that year:

Lincoln and Stanton thought highly of Butler, and I will now tell you of another fact that is not generally known, and which will show you how near Butler came to being President instead of Andrew Johnson. In the spring of 1864, when it was determined to run Mr. Lincoln for a second term, it was the desire of Lincoln and also that of Stanton, who was the one man of the Cabinet upon whom Lincoln thoroughly depended, that Butler should run on the ticket with him as the candidate for Vice President. I was called into consultation and heartily endorsed the scheme. Accordingly Lincoln sent me on a mission to Fort Monroe to see General Butler, and to say to him that it was his (Lincoln's) request that he (General Butler) should allow himself to be run as second on the ticket.

I, accompanied by William H. Armstrong, afterwards a member of Congress from the Williamsport district, did visit General Butler and made the tender according to instructions. To our astonishment Butler refused to agree to the proposition. He said there was nothing in the Vice Presidency and he preferred remaining in command of his army, where he thought he would be of more service to his country.

#### YOUNG'S COMMENTS.

He Reviews the Cameron Interview of 1873 and Sums Up the Situation.

From the Philadelphia Star, July 9, 1891.

It was first thought best to match the McClellan bait thrown out by the Democrats proper by placing on the ticket with Lincoln some successful general in the field whose antecedents were Democratic. In this way

were brought forward the names of Generals Butler, Dix, Logan and Sickles. It was decided that General Butler came the nearest to filling the bill, and accordingly General Cameron was sent on the mission to Fort Monroe that has been previously described. When General Butler's refusal to run was received the Seward element of the Administration, manipulated by Thurlow Weed, came boldly to the front with the proposition to force the fighting by the nomination of some pronounced border State Union Democrat. This meant Andrew Johnson, of course, as he was about the only one on hand to fit into the position. Cameron was not enthusiastic on Johnson and tried to talk Lincoln out of the idea, but he failed to impress him. He turned in, however, and gave the ticket his hearty support.

#### JONES SPEAKS FOR RAYMOND.

Raymond, the Lincoln Leader at Baltimore, Supported Johnson.

Henry J. Raymond was editor of the New York Times in 1864, of which George Jones was then, as now, the chief owner, and their relations were of the most confidential character. Raymond was the Lincoln leader and the master spirit of the Baltimore Convention of 1864. He framed and reported the platform; he was made chairman of the National Committee; he wrote the Life of Lincoln for the campaign, and it was his leadership that carried a majority of the New York delegation for Johnson even against Dickinson, from Raymond's own State, because he was in the confidence of and acting in accord with the wishes of Lincoln. Raymond has long since joined the great majority beyond, but Jones thus incisively speaks for him:

SOUTH POLAND, Me., July 17, 1891.

MY DEAR COLONEL McCURE: Your letter has been forwarded to me here. I have read the contention about the V. Presidency, and do not hesitate to say that you are absolutely in the right in your statement of the facts.

I had many talks with Raymond on the subject. Dickinson's friends never forgave him, although he made Dickinson U. S. District Attorney afterwards to compensate him for the loss of the V. Presidency. Seward and Weed were also with Raymond in that fight.

*Truly Yours  
Geo. Jones.*

#### A CABINET MINISTER TESTIFIES

Secretary Welles Tells the Inside Story of the Vice Presidency.

Gideon Welles, in the Galaxy, Nov. 1891.

Mr. Hamlin, who was elated with Lincoln in 1860, had not displayed the breadth of view and enlightened statesmanship which was expected, and consequently lost confidence with the country during his term. Yet there was no concentration or unity on anyone to fill his place. His friends and supporters while conscious that he brought no strength to the ticket, claimed, but with no zeal or earnestness, that as Mr. Lincoln was renominated, it would be invidious not to nominate Hamlin also.

The question of substituting another for Vice President had been discussed in political circles prior to the meeting of the Convention, without any marked personal preference, but with a manifest desire that there should be a change. Mr. Lincoln felt the delicacy of his position and was therefore careful to avoid the expression of any opinion, but it was known to those who enjoyed his confidence, that he appreciated the honesty, integrity and self-sacrificing patriotism of Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee.

#### GENERAL SICKLES' STATEMENT.

The Lincoln Note to Nicolay is the Key That Unlocks the Mystery.

General Sickles' Interview in New York Times.

When I went South to visit Governor Johnson this sentiment was in the air, continued General Sickles. I knew of it, but I considered from my past position that it would be indelicate for me to invite the President's confidence on purely political mat-

ters. It was not my mission to undertake to bring about changes in Mr. Johnson's methods of administration which should affect his standing before the Baltimore Convention. The result of my visit may have had some such effect. I do not say that it did not. I reported to Mr. Lincoln and to Mr. Seward.

Now, what was the situation at Baltimore? Mr. Leonard Swett was President Lincoln's shadow. Whatever Mr. Swett did represented and reflected Mr. Lincoln's views. In the Baltimore Convention Mr. Swett at once came out for Judge Holt, a border State man. Mr. Nicolay sent word to Mr. Hay, who had been left to keep house, asking if the President approved of this. Now note Mr. Lincoln's reply:

"Swett is unquestionably all right. Mr. Holt is a good man, but I had not thought of him for Vice President. Wish not to interfere."

That tells the whole story. Mr. Lincoln knew that Mr. Swett, in bringing out a border State man, was doing precisely right. The indorsement on that note was for Mr. Nicolay's eye. He was not one of the President's close advisers. He was but a clerk. He was not the man whom President Lincoln would send to Baltimore to take a hand in shaping the convention. A tyro in politics would see that if the President wanted a thing done his own secretary would have been the last messenger sent to do it. It would have revealed the President's hand if Mr. Nicolay had been given a mission in the convention.

Colonel McClure, Governor Andrew G. Curtin, Simon Cameron and others of that stamp were the men whom Mr. Lincoln relied on. So that while the indorsement on the note gives Mr. Nicolay documentary evidence for his position, that very remark, "Swett is all right," gives Colonel McClure good ground for his position if there were nothing else.

Mr. Seward and Mr. Stanton were close advisers of Mr. Lincoln. They spoke their sentiments in favor of a border State man. That they advised the choice of Mr. Johnson I do not know, nor that the President had chosen Mr. Johnson I do not know, but the one expression, "Swett is all right," is the key that unlocks all the mystery there is in this present controversy.

#### FROM GOVERNOR STONE.

He Was an Iowa Delegate—His Interview With Lincoln—Hamlin's Name Not Mentioned.

Ex-Gov. Wm. M. Stone in Chicago Tribune.

Without directly answering my question he (Lincoln) proceeded to say that it might be deemed advisable to select some prominent Union Democrat in order to encourage that sentiment throughout the country and satisfy Southern men that the Republican party was not acting altogether upon strict party lines, but was willing to co-operate with any set of men who desired to assist in saving the Union.

He further said that the loyal element in the Democratic party had rendered us great assistance in their unselfish devotion to the Union, and it was but just that they should be recognized. He then in about the following order proceeded to name General B. F. Butler, of Massachusetts; Joseph Holt, of Kentucky; General John A. Dix, Daniel S. Dickinson and Lyman Tremaine, of New York, and Andrew Johnson, of Tennessee, and some others of lesser note that I am not now able to recall; in short, on the highest ground of expediency he thought it would be wise to select some so-called Union Democrat for Vice President. But, as you see, he shrewdly avoided expressing any preference among the number that was named over. Mr. Hamlin's name was not mentioned.

# THE NOMINATION OF JOHNSON.

## Why Lincoln Desired It and Worked to Secure It.

**A Southern War Democrat Needed—Gloomy Outlook of the Political Battle in the Summer of 1864—The Dispatches from Sherman and Sheridan Which Decided the Contest.**

Special Correspondence of the Globe-Democrat.  
PHILADELPHIA, Pa., November 12.—The fact that Abraham Lincoln conceived and executed the scheme to nominate Andrew Johnson for Vice President in 1864 has been feebly disputed, but is now accepted as the truth of history. It was not an arbitrary exercise of political power on the part of Lincoln. He had no prejudice against Hannibal Hamlin to inspire him to compass Hamlin's defeat. He had no special love for Andrew Johnson to lead him to overthrow his old associate of 1860 and make the Military Governor of an insurgent State his fellow-candidate for 1864. Hamlin was not in close sympathy with Lincoln; on the contrary, he was known as one who passively rather than actively strengthened a powerful cabal of Republican leaders in their ag-



ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

gressive hostility to Lincoln and his general policy, but Lincoln was incapable of yielding to prejudice, however strong, in planning his great campaign for re-election in 1864. Had Hamlin been ten times more offensive than he was to Lincoln, it would not have halted Lincoln for a moment in favoring Hamlin's renomination if he believed it good politics to do so. He rejected Hamlin not because he hated him; he accepted Johnson not because he loved him. He was guided in what he did, or what he did not, in planning the great campaign of his life that he believed involved the destiny of the country itself, by the single purpose of making success as nearly certain as possible.

Hamlin was nominated for the Vice Presidency in 1860 simply because he was a representative Republican fresh from the Democratic party. Another consideration that favored his selection was the fact that his State had been carried into the Republican party under his leadership, and that its State election in September would be the finger-board of success or defeat in the national contest. His position as Representative, Senator and Governor, and his admitted ability and high character, fully justified his nomination as the candidate for Vice President; but when elected there was the usual



Andrew Johnson.

While the defeat of Lee at Gettysburg and the surrender of Vicksburg the year before had done much to inspire faith in the success of the war, the Confederacy was stubbornly maintaining its armies. The opening of the new year of 1864 called for large drafts of men to fill the thinned ranks of the Union forces, and there was a powerful undertow of despondency among the loyal people of the North. The war was costing \$3,000,000 a day, and after three years of bloody conflict the end was not in view. The Republican leaders in the early part of 1864 were divided in councils, distracted by the conflicts of ambition, and very many of the ablest of them regarded the defeat of the party as not only possible but more than probable. The one man who fully understood the peril and who studied carefully how to avert it was Abraham Lincoln.

Lincoln, as was his usual custom, consulted with all who came within his reach and developed his views from time to time with extreme caution. In the early part of the year he reached the conclusion that it would be eminently wise to nominate a conspicuous war Democrat for Vice President along with himself for President. A number of prominent men who acted with the Democratic party in 1860 against Lincoln's election, but who patriotically entered the military service and won distinction by their heroism, represented a very large class of Democratic voters upon whom Lincoln felt he must rely for his re-election. Hamlin had been a Democrat, but he did not come under the class of war Democrats; while Butler, Dix, Dickinson, Johnson, Holt and others represented a distinctive and very formidable class of citizens who, while yet professing to be Democrats, were ready to support the war under Lincoln until it should be successfully terminated by the restoration of the Union. Lincoln's first selection for Vice President was Gen. Butler. I believe he reached that conclusion without specially consulting with any of his friends. As early as March, 1864, he sent for Gen. Cameron, to whom he proposed the nomination of Butler, and that, I assume, was his first declaration of his purpose to any one on the subject. He confided to Cameron the mission to Fortress Monroe to confer confidentially with Butler. On that journey Cameron was accompanied by ex-Congressman William H. Armstrong, of Pennsylvania, who was first informed of the real object of Cameron's visit when they were returning home, and after Butler had declined to permit his name to be considered. Butler was at that time a strong man in the loyal States. He had not achieved great military success, but his administration in New Orleans had made him universally popular throughout the North, in which the vindictive vituperation of the Southern people heaped upon him was an important factor. Butler's declination was peremptory, and Cameron returned home without learning in what direction Lincoln would be likely to look for a candidate for Vice President.

In a later conference with Cameron, in which the names of Johnson, Dickinson and Dix were seriously discussed, Lincoln expressed his preference for Johnson, to which Cameron, with unconcealed reluctance, finally assented. While Lincoln at that time decided in favor of Johnson, he did not himself regard it as final. His extreme caution and exceptional sagacity made him carefully consider all possible weak points in Johnson's candidacy before he launched the movement for his nomination. He summoned Gen. Sickles to Washington, sent him to Tennessee on a confidential mission to examine and make a report to him of the success of Johnson's administration as Military Governor. That State was in a revolutionary condition. Johnson was charged with violent and despotic official acts, and

steadily widening chasm between him and the Executive, and like nearly or quite all Vice Presidents, he drifted into the embrace of the opposition to his chief. It was this opposition, led by men of such consummate ability as Wade, of Ohio, and Henry Winter Davis, of Maryland, that admonished Lincoln of the necessity of putting himself in the strongest possible attitude for the then admittedly doubtful battle of 1864.

Lincoln meant to know fully whether Johnson might, by reason of his administration, be vulnerable as a national candidate. Sickles had no knowledge of the real purpose of his mission. The question of nominating Johnson for the Vice Presidency was never suggested or even intimated to Sickles, and he fulfilled his trust and reported favorably on Johnson's administration without

even a suspicion that he was to determine the destiny of Andrew Johnson, make him Vice President of the United States, and thus President.

Lincoln's purpose in seeking Johnson as his associate on the national ticket in 1864 was much more far-reaching than any but himself at the time supposed. He meant to guard against possible defeat by getting a number of the insurgent States in some sort of line to enable their electoral votes to be counted if needed. His most promising experiment was in Tennessee under the guidance of Johnson, but he obviously intended that the States of Louisiana, Arkansas and West Virginia, with Tennessee, should be organized with the semblance of full Statehood to make their electoral votes available should the national contest be close. Had he developed this policy to his party or to Congress it would have been met with positive and aggressive opposition, but he developed it in the quietest way possible. His first movement in that line was to have delegations elected to the National Convention from the Southern States named, and when they appeared at the Baltimore Convention on the 7th of June the battle for their admission was waged with consummate skill by the few who understood Lincoln's policy. Tennessee being in the strongest attitude, the delegation from that State was selected on which to make the fight. It was desperately contested, because it was then well understood to mean the nomination of Johnson for Vice President, but the Tennessee delegates were admitted by more than a two-thirds vote. With Tennessee accepted as entitled to representation, the contest was ended, and Louisiana and Arkansas were given the right of representation without a serious struggle.

When Congress met again after the election in November, and when Lincoln's election by an overwhelming popular as well as electoral vote was assured, the question of counting the electoral votes of Louisiana, Tennessee and Arkansas was raised and elaborately discussed in both branches. As Lincoln had 212 electoral votes to 21 for McClellan, exclusive of the votes of the three insurgent States referred to, there was no political necessity to induce Congress to strain a point for the acceptance of these votes; and a joint resolution was finally passed declaring "that no valid election for electors of President and Vice President of the United States" had been held in Louisiana, Tennessee and Arkansas. Lincoln approved the resolution, but took occasion by special message to disclaim approval of the recital of the preamble. Had the votes of these three States been needed to elect a Republican President, I hazard little in saying that they would have been treated as regular and lawful and counted with the approval of both the Senate and House; as they were not needed, and as the development of these States was Lincoln's own conception, those who were not specially friendly scored an empty victory against him.

He moved with masterly sagacity at every step in his efforts to nominate Johnson, and his selection of Gen. Cameron as early as March to be his first ambassador in search of a war Democrat for Vice President was not one of the least of his many shrewd conceptions. The relations between Lincoln and Cameron had been somewhat strained by Cameron's retirement from the Cabinet in 1862. At least Lincoln assumed that they might be somewhat strained on the part of Cameron, and he took early caution to enlist Cameron in his renomination. He knew the power of Cameron in the manipulation of discordant political elements, and he fully appreciated the fact that Cameron's skill made him a dangerous opponent. He bound Cameron to himself by making him one of his trusted leaders in the selection of a candidate for Vice President. The man who was probably closest to Lincoln in this movement was Henry J. Raymond, but in this, as in all Lincoln's movements, his confidence was limited with each of his trusted agents. Raymond was then editor of the only prominent New York journal that heartily supported Lincoln; and he, with the aid of Seward and Weed, who early entered into the movement for the nomination of Johnson, overthrew Dickinson in his own State and was the confessed Lincoln leader in the Baltimore Convention of 1864. With Dickinson beaten in New York and with Hamlin's forces demoralized early in the contest, the nomination of Johnson was easily accomplished, chiefly because it was what Lincoln desired.



Hannibal Hamlin.

direct intervention to nominate Johnson for Vice President in 1864. Hamlin gave an earnest support to the ticket, believing that the supreme sentiment of Republicanism had set him aside in the interest of the public welfare. He maintained his high position in the party for many years thereafter, filling the office of Collector of Portland and subsequently returning to the Senate, where he served until he had passed the patriarchal age and then voluntarily retired to enjoy the calm evening of a well-spent life.

A. K. MCCLURE.

J WRIGHT

Neither Swett nor Lamon had any knowledge of Lincoln's positive movement for the nomination of Johnson until within a day or two of the meeting of the Convention. Col. Lamon has recently given a description of the scene between Lincoln, Swett and himself a day or two before they went to Baltimore to aid in Lincoln's renomination. Swett earnestly and even passionately protested against the overthrow of Hamlin, but after hearing Lincoln fully on the subject, he consented to go to the Convention, in which he was a delegate from Illinois, and support the nomination of Johnson, but he wisely declared Holt to be his candidate, as a foil to protect Lincoln. Swett naturally felt uncertain as to how the suggestion of Johnson's name would be received at Baltimore, as he had no knowledge of the extent to which Lincoln had progressed in the Johnson movement. In answer to his inquiry, whether he was at liberty to say that Lincoln desired Johnson's nomination, Lincoln answered in the negative, and, as quoted by Col. Lamon in a recent public letter, said: "No, I will address a letter to Lamon here embodying my views, which you, McClure and other friends may use if it be found absolutely necessary; otherwise it may be better that I shall not appear actively on the stage of this theater." The letter was written by Lincoln and delivered to Lamon, who had it with him at Baltimore, but as there was no occasion for using it, it was never shown to any one, and was returned to Lincoln after the Convention at his request.

How shrewdly Lincoln moved, and with what extreme caution he guarded his confidence, is well illustrated by the fact that while he consulted Cameron confidentially about the nomination of Johnson some months before the Convention, and consulted me on the same subject the day before the Convention met, neither of us supposed that the other was acting in the special confidence of Lincoln. On the contrary, I supposed that Cameron was sincerely friendly to Hamlin, and would battle for his nomination, until he finally proposed to me the night before the Convention met that we give a solid complimentary vote to Hamlin, and follow it with a solid vote for Johnson. Another evidence of his extreme caution in politics is given by the fact that while he carefully concealed from both Cameron and myself the fact that the other was in his confidence in the same movement, he surprised me a few weeks before the Convention by sending for me and requesting me to come to the Convention as a delegate at large. I had already been unanimously chosen as a delegate from my own congressional district, and was amazed when I informed Lincoln of that fact, to find that he still insisted upon me going before the State Convention and having myself elected as a delegate at large. To all my explanations that a man in the delegation was good for just what he was worth, whether he represented the district or the State, Lincoln persisted in the request that I should come as a delegate at large. When I finally pressed him for an explanation of what seemed to me to be a needless request involving great embarrassment to me, he finally with evident reluctance answered: "Gen. Cameron has assured me that he will be a delegate at large from your State, and while I have no reason to question his sincerity as my friend, if he is to be a delegate at large from Pennsylvania, I would very much prefer that you be one with him." Had he been willing to tell me the whole truth he would have informed me that Cameron was enlisted in the Johnson movement, and that he specially desired at least two of the delegates at large representing opposing factions to be active supporters of Johnson's nomination. There could be no other reasonable explanation of his earnest request to me to accept the embarrassing position of seeking an election from the State Convention when I was already an elected delegate from my district. A fortunate combination of circumstances made it possible for me to be elected without a serious contest, Cameron and I receiving nearly a unanimous vote.

Lincoln realized the fact that the chances were greatly against his re-election unless he should be saved by the success of the Union army. There was no period from January, 1864, until the 3d of September of the same year, when McClellan would not have defeated Lincoln for President. The two speeches of that campaign which turned the tide and gave Lincoln his overwhelming victory were Sherman's dispatch from Atlanta on the 3d of September, saying: "Atlanta is ours and fairly won," and Sheridan's dispatch of the 19th of September from the Valley saying: "We have just cut them (the enemy) whirling through Winchester and we are after them to-morrow." From the opening of the military campaign in the spring of 1864 until Sherman announced the capture of Atlanta, there was not a single important victory of the Union army to inspire the loyal people of the country with confidence in the success of our war. Grant's cam-

paign from the Rapidan to the James was the bloodiest in the history of the struggle. He had lost as many men in killed, wounded and missing as Lee ever had in front of him, and there was no substantial victory in all the sacrifice made by the gallant Army of the Potomac. Sherman had been fighting continuously for four months without a decisive battle. The people at the North had become heart-sick at the fearful sacrifices which brought no visible achievement. Democratic sentiment had drifted to McClellan as the opposing candi-

date, and so profoundly was Lincoln impressed by the gloomy situation that confronted him, that on the 23d of August, seven days before the nomination of McClellan, and ten days before the capture of Atlanta, he wrote the following memorandum, sealed it in an envelope and had it indorsed by several members of the Cabinet, including Secretary Welles, with written instructions that it was not to be opened until after the election:

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, August 23, 1864.—This morning, as for some days past, it seems exceedingly probable that this Administration will not be re-elected. Then it will be my duty to co-operate with the President elect so as to save the Union, between the election and the inauguration, as he will have secured his election on such grounds that he can not possibly save it afterward.

LINCOLN.

Nor was Lincoln alone in his apprehension of defeat. Distrust and disintegration were common throughout the entire Republican organization, and nearly all of the sincere supporters of Lincoln were in next to utter despair of political success. I spent an hour with him in the Executive Chamber some ten days before he wrote the memorandum before given, and I never saw him more dejected in my life. His face, always sad in repose, was then saddened until it became a picture of despair, and he spoke of the want of sincere and earnest support from the Republican leaders with unusual freedom. I distinctly remember his reference to the fact that of all the Republican members of the House he could name but one in whose personal and political friendship he could absolutely confide. That one man was Isaac N. Arnold, of Illinois. Stevens, the great commoner of the war, while sincerely desiring Lincoln's re-election because he hated McClellan worse than he hated Lincoln, and because he felt that the election of Lincoln was necessary to the safety of the Union, was intensely bitter against Lincoln personally, and rarely missed an opportunity to thrust his keenest invectives upon him. New York had a Democratic Governor of matchless ability, and that great State was regarded as almost hopelessly lost. Pennsylvania was trembling in the balance, as was confirmed by the failure of the Republicans to carry the State at the October election, and Indiana would have been almost in rebellion but for the victories of Sherman and Sheridan during the month of September.

At this interview Lincoln seemed to have but one overmastering desire, and that was to attain peace on the basis of a restored Union. He took from a corner of his desk a paper written out in his own handwriting, proposing to pay the South \$400,000,000 as compensation for their slaves on condition that the States should return to their allegiance to the Government and accept emancipation. I shall never forget the emotion exhibited by Lincoln when, after reading this paper to me, he said: "If I could only get this proposition before the Southern people I believe they would accept it, and I have faith that the Northern people, however startled at first, would soon appreciate the wisdom of such a settlement of the war. One hundred days of war would cost us the \$400,000,000 I would propose to give for emancipation and a restored republic, not to speak of the priceless sacrifice of life and the additional sacrifice of property, but were I to make this offer now it would defeat me inevitably and probably defeat emancipation." I had seen him many times when army disasters shadowed the land and oppressed him with sorrow, but I never saw him so profoundly moved by grief as he was on that day when there seemed to be not even a sliver of link to the political cloud that hung over him. Few now recall the grave perils to Lincoln's re-election which thickened almost at every turn in 1864 until the country was electrified by Sherman's inspiring dispatch from Atlanta, followed by Sheridan's brilliant victories in the valley and Sherman's memorable march to the sea; and it was these grave perils and these supreme necessities long understood by Lincoln, which made him, in his broad and sagacious way, carefully view the field for the strongest candidate for Vice President, and finally led him to nominate Andrew Johnson. To Lincoln, and to Lincoln alone, Johnson owed his nomination.

I had no personal knowledge of Lincoln's purpose to nominate Johnson for Vice President until the day before the Baltimore Convention met. He telegraphed me to visit Washington before attending the Conven-

tion, and I did so. He opened the conversation by advising me to give my vote and active support to Johnson as his associate on the ticket. It was evident that he confidently relied on my willingness to accept his judgment in the matter. I had expected to support the renomination of Hamlin. I had little respect for Andrew Johnson, and of all the men named for the position, he was the last I would have chosen if I had been left to the exercise of my own judgment. It is more than probable that I would have obeyed the wishes of Lincoln, even if he had not presented the very strong and, indeed, conclusive reasons for his request; but after hearing the arguments which had led him to the conclusion that Johnson should be nominated as his associate, I was quite as ready to accept the wisdom of the proposition as to obey the wishes of the President.

There was not a trace of bitterness, prejudice, or even unfriendliness, toward Hamlin in all that Lincoln said about the vice presidency, and he was careful to say that he did not desire the nomination of Johnson to gratify any personal preference of his own. He naturally preferred a new man, as Hamlin was not in sympathy with Lincoln personally or with the general policy of his administration, but he preferred Johnson for two reasons, which he presented with unanswerable clearness. First, he was the most conspicuous, most aggressive and the most able of all the war Democrats of that time, and was just in the position to command the largest measure of sympathy and support from that very important political element, Dix, Dickinson, Butler and Holt had made no such impressive exhibition of their loyalty as had Johnson in Tennessee. He was then just in the midst of his great work of rehabilitating his rebellious State and restoring it to the Union, and his loyal achievements were therefore fresh before the people and certain to continue so during the campaign. There was really no answer to Lincoln's argument on this point. Second, the stronger and more imperative reason for Lincoln preferring Johnson was one that I had not appreciated fully until he had presented it. The great peril of the Union at that day was the recognition of the Confederacy by England and France, and every month's delay of the overthrow of the rebellious armies increased the danger. Extraordinary efforts had been made by Lincoln to stimulate the Union sentiment, especially in England, but with only moderate success, and there was no safety from one day to another against a war with England and France, that would have been fatal to the success of the Union cause. The only possible way to hinder recognition was to show successful results of the war in restoring the disaffected States to their old allegiance, and Lincoln was firmly convinced that no other method could the Union sentiment abroad be so greatly inspired and strengthened as by the nomination and election of a representative Southern man to the vice presidency from one of the rebellious States in the very heart of the Confederacy. These reasons decided Lincoln to prefer Johnson for Vice President, and Lincoln possessed both the power to make the nomination and the wisdom to dictate it without jarring the party organization.

The fact that Lincoln did not make known to Hamlin and his friends his purpose to nominate another for Vice President in '64, does not accuse him of deceit or insincerity; and the additional fact that when the Convention was in session and he was asked for a categorical answer as to his position on the vice presidency, he declined to express his wishes or to avow his interference with the action of the party, can not be justly construed into political double dealing. It was quite as much a necessity for Lincoln to conceal his movements for the nomination of Johnson as it was, in his judgment, a necessity for him to nominate a Southern man and a War Democrat, and he simply acted with rare sagacity and discretion in his movements and with fidelity to the country, the safety of which was paramount with him. Hamlin was profoundly grieved over his defeat, as were his many friends, and had they seen the hand of Lincoln in it, they would have resented it with bitterness; but Hamlin himself was not fully convinced of Lincoln's opposition to his renomination until within two years of his death. I have in my possession an autograph letter from Hamlin to Judge Pettis, of Pennsylvania, to whom Lincoln had expressed his desire for Johnson's nomination on the morning of the day the Convention met, in which he says that he had seen and heard statements relating to Lincoln's action in the matter, but he did not believe them until the evidence had lately been made conclusive to his mind. In this letter he says: "I was really sorry to be disabused." And he adds: "Mr. L. (Lincoln) evidently became some alarmed about his re-election, and changed his position. That is all I care to say." I have thus the conclusive evidence from Hamlin himself, that in September, 1864, he had full knowledge of Lincoln's

## LINCOLN AND HAMLIN.

### The Former's Preference in the Matter of the Vice Presidency.

*Noah Brooks, in the Century.*

I had hoped to see Mr. Hamlin renominated, and had anxiously given Mr. Lincoln many opportunities to say whether he preferred the renomination of the vice president; but he was craftily and rigidly non-committal, knowing, as he did, what was in my mind concerning Mr. Hamlin. He would refer to the matter only in the vaguest phrase, as "Mr. Hamlin is a very good man," or "You, being a New Englander, would naturally like to see Mr. Hamlin renominated; and you are quite right," and so on. By this time Lincoln's renomination was an absolute certainty, and he cheerfully conceded that point without any false modesty. But he could not be induced to express any opinion on the subject of the selection of a candidate for vice president. He did go so far as to say that he hoped that the convention would declare in favor of the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery as one of the articles of the party faith. But beyond that, nothing.

I may say here that when I returned from the convention I made a verbal report to the president, and entertained him with an account of some of its doings of which he had not previously heard; and he was then willing to admit that he would have been gratified if Mr. Hamlin had been renominated. But he said: "Some of our folks (referring, as I believed, to Republican leaders) had expressed the opinion that it would be wise to take a war Democrat as candidate for vice president, and that, if possible, a border state man should be the nominee." Mr. Lincoln appeared to be satisfied with the result, saying: "Andy Johnson, I think, is a good man." Nevertheless, I have always been confident that Lincoln, left to himself, would have chosen that old ticket of 1860—Lincoln and Hamlin—should be placed in the field. It is reasonable to suppose that he had resolved to leave the convention entirely free in its choice of a candidate for the second place on the ticket.

## SEES FUTURE FOR TEDDY

### FOULKE LAUDS AFRICAN HERO

Speaker at Lincoln Banquet Decries  
Temporary Whims of People Which  
Belittle Popular Men After  
Short While.

RICHMOND, Ind., Feb. 13.—(Special)  
—William Dudley Foulke, personal  
friend of Theodore Roosevelt, voiced the  
opinion tonight that the former Presi-  
dent could and would "come back." Mr.  
Foulke expressed such a sentiment be-  
fore the Commercial Club at their Lin-  
coln day smoker. The reference to  
Roosevelt was made in connection with  
the change of sentiment concerning  
Lincoln just prior to the first conven-  
tion.

Mr. Foulke reviewed notable instances  
showing the instability of opinion of the  
people of this country, in which he cited  
particularly Lincoln, Admiral Dewey  
and Roosevelt. Mr. Foulke said he had  
the greatest faith in the permanent  
opinion of the people, but their tempo-  
rary whims could not be relied on. Ac-  
cording to Mr. Foulke, Roosevelt will  
again come into popular favor with the  
people and again exert the great influ-  
ence which he had prior to the late  
campaign.

The principal speaker at the Commer-  
cial Club's smoker was Isaac Jenkinson,  
one of the three living electors who voted  
for Lincoln in 1860. The talk of Mr.  
Jenkinson was based on matters secured  
first hand, and for that reason doubly in-  
teresting.

#### ANENT NAMING OF JOHNSON.

Mr. Jenkinson told of the nomination  
of Andrew Johnson for Vice President and  
the prominent part which Indiana played  
in the choice made. The nomination  
really came by accident and it was never  
intended to give Johnson any more than  
a complimentary vote on the first ballot.  
When the Indiana delegates were in-  
structed to vote for Lincoln in the con-  
vention, in order to appease the union  
Democrats, whose support was being  
sought by the Republicans, they were  
also instructed to vote for Johnson of  
Tennessee on the first ballot.

The Hoosier delegation had a hard time  
to get any one to present Johnson's name,  
and then it was done without a speech.  
Iowa and Ohio, learning what Indiana in-  
tended to do as a compliment to Johnson,  
seconded the nomination and the conven-  
tion, mistaking the action, took up John-  
son's name like wildfire and he was nomi-  
nated on the first ballot.

Mr. Jenkinson said that he did not  
credit the story that Lincoln sought John-  
son's nomination, for Senator Kilgore of  
Indiana and Jenkinson spent an hour with  
Lincoln the afternoon before the conven-  
tion, and Lincoln expressed to them that  
he did not think it was his place to sug-  
gest to the convention who should be  
nominated for Vice President, and he de-  
clared emphatically that he would take  
no hand in it. Mr. Jenkinson said that  
Lincoln frankly admitted that afternoon  
that he desired the nomination for Presi-  
dent again, not for the position itself, but  
as an indorsement of his administration.

Mr. Jenkinson said that his impression  
of Lincoln at the time was that he was  
a cultured gentleman, and he declared he  
never saw any one dispatch business so  
quickly.

## REMINISCENCES OF LINCOLN.

### Isaac Jenkinson Disputes Statements of Some Historians.

[Special to The Indianapolis News.]

RICHMOND, Ind., February 14.—In a clear, forceful and entertaining manner, Isaac Jenkinson, veteran journalist, and the only living member of the Lincoln electoral college from Indiana, delivered an address on Lincoln before the Commercial Club, last night. Mr. Jenkinson, instead of dealing in generalities concerning the power and accomplishments of the war time President, devoted himself to reciting some personal reminiscences of Lincoln. He told of a trip to Washington and of his visit with Lincoln in the White House office only a day before the Republican convention which was to nominate Lincoln for the second time.

Mr. Jenkinson related that Lincoln was very careful to indicate that he had no desire to dictate, even in an indirect way, who should be the nominee for Vice-President and this, Mr. Jenkinson said, showed that all the statements of historians that Lincoln was responsible for the nomination of Andrew Johnson, were unfounded in fact. Mr. Jenkinson also related some of the inside politics that Indiana played during the Lincoln campaign.

### Surprised and Disappointed.

"To say that both the convention and the public at large were surprised at the result is to put the case mildly. I remember, indeed, that coming out of the hall I encountered Dr. W. E. Brown of my State, then an official of the Interior Department here, but now a merchant living in Chicago, who said to me excitedly: 'You fellows have played —. We have no lease on Abe Lincoln's life. Suppose he should die, or, worse still, suppose somebody should kill him, where would we be? Who knows what Andrew Johnson as President would do? If Hannlin was to be thrown over why didn't the convention nominate some reliable Northern man whose attitude on the great questions of the day is well defined and acceptable to the country?' I explained to Brown that the Illinois people had no part or lot in the matter, and that, moreover, I felt pretty much as he did about it."

"If Illinois had known that Hannlin was doomed whom would she have supported for second place?"

"Daniel S. Dickinson of New York. We liked him, and besides there was a serious division in the Empire State at that time which his nomination would have instantly healed. But I thought then and I think now that the rejection of Mr. Hannlin was a great mistake. He ought to have been renominated."

"He was a good man and had the esteem of the country. Moreover, upon the main propositions he was in full agreement with the President."

"He held as stoutly as Mr. Lincoln did that the war at that time was not a failure, and he favored as warmly as Mr. Lincoln the prosecution of it to the end. That was the question then. The Democrats insisted that the war was a failure. The Republicans insisted that it must go on until the Union was restored. The aptest of Mr. Lincoln's many homely illustrations was that it was unwise to swap horses while crossing a stream. The case of Mr. Hannlin is directly in point in proof of the terrible truth of that utterance."

March  
1911

March  
1911

# LINCOLN LORE

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Published each week by The Lincoln National Life Insurance Company, Fort Wayne, Indiana

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May 18, 1942

## THE HAMLIN vs. JOHNSON CONTEST

The atmosphere of political primaries recalls one of the most interesting convention contests for the Vice-Presidency of the United States which has been waged during the history of American politics. The part that Mr. Lincoln played, if any, in selecting the Vice-Presidential nominee of the Baltimore Convention of the Union Party in 1864, has always been the chief point of discussion.

Several political leaders claim to have had conferences with Mr. Lincoln about the Vice-Presidential nomination and their conclusions are summarized in the following testimonies.

### *The Field*

William M. Stone alleged he had an interview about the Vice-President with Lincoln who acknowledged that the unselfish devotion to the Union by loyal Democrats "should be recognized." Stone said, "He then in about the following order proceeded to name General B. F. Butler of Massachusetts, Joseph Holt of Kentucky, Generals John A. Dix, Daniel S. Dickinson and Lyman Tremaine of New York, and Andrew Johnson of Tennessee and some others of less note. . . . He shrewdly avoided expressing any preference among the number that was named over." It will be observed that the field remembered by Stone does not contain the name of the supposed favorite, Hamlin.

### *Hannibal Hamlin*

A. J. Waterman recalled that on the night before the convention Henry Wilson came to the headquarters of the Massachusetts delegation and stated that he had "full authority to represent the views of President Lincoln privately, and that it was the earnest desire of Mr. Lincoln that Hamlin should be nominated." Noah Brooks, a Hamlin supporter, said he had "anxiously given Mr. Lincoln many opportunities to say whether he preferred the renomination of the Vice-President; but he was craftily and rigidly non-committal, knowing as he did what was in my mind concerning Mr. Hamlin." John G. Nicolay claimed that Lincoln's "personal feelings were for Hamlin's renomination."

### *Judge Holt*

John Hay gave this version in the Nicolay and Hay biography, "For several days before the convention the President had been besieged by inquiries as to his personal wishes in regard to his associate on the ticket. He had persistently refused to give the slightest intimation of such wish. . . ." Hay also mentions that Leonard Swett, an intimate friend of Lincoln's, was at the convention urging Joseph Holt for the Vice-Presidency. Although Lincoln's secretary, Nicolay, who was at Baltimore, was acquainted with the non-committal attitude of Lincoln, he was persuaded by delegates to get a written comment on Swett's loyalty and Holt's candidacy. This was the endorsement on the back of Nicolay's note of inquiry, "Swett is unquestionably all right. Mr. Holt is a good man, but I had not heard or thought of him for the V. P. wish not to interfere about V. P. cannot interfere about platform. Convention must judge for itself."

### *Daniel S. Dickinson*

Mr. Thurlow Weed claimed that "Daniel S. Dickinson was the choice of Mr. Lincoln and that he would have been nominated had not Mr. Curtis in presenting him to the New York delegation avowed that the object of the nomination was hostility to Mr. Seward." Mr. Curtis, however, made it plain later that it was not his purpose to injure Dickinson's prospects.

### *Benjamin F. Butler*

It was noised about that Hamlin would not be a candidate for the office in 1864. Upon the strength of this

supposition Simon Cameron had an interview with Gen. Benjamin F. Butler, who reporter Cameron's conversation as follows:

"The President, as you know, intends to be a candidate for re-election, and as his friends indicated that Mr. Hamlin is no longer to be a candidate for Vice-President and as he is from New England, the President thinks that this place should be filled by some one from that section . . . he hopes that you will allow your friends to cooperate with him to place you in that position."

### *Andrew Johnson*

When Cameron's initiative in the Butler interview was smothered by Butler's refusal to accept the suggestion, Seward and his political adviser, Thurlow Weed, came to the front with the Andrew Johnson proposal. To contact Johnson they used John W. Forney as the keyman who stated that "Lincoln, on the whole, preferred Johnson first and Holt next."

S. Newton Pettis gave the most interesting version, he said: "Immediately before leaving for Baltimore I called upon Mr. Lincoln in his study and stated that I called especially to ask him whom he desired put on the ticket with him as Vice-President. He leaned forward, and in a low but distinct tone of voice said, 'Governor Johnson of Tennessee.'"

Gideon Welles in commenting on the preliminaries in the Vice-President contest stated that there seemed to be no leading candidate up to the time of the convention and suggested, "Mr. Lincoln felt the delicacy of his position and was, therefore, careful to avoid the expression of any opinion, but it was known to those who enjoyed his confidence that he appreciated the honesty, integrity, and self-sacrificing patriotism of Andrew Johnson of Tennessee."

Charles A. Tinker, a telegraph operator in Washington at the time of the convention of New York, claimed that when Abraham Lincoln was in the War Department telegraph office when he received the message announcing Johnson had been nominated for Vice-President, and that he soliloquized aloud, "Well, I thought possibly he might be the man. Perhaps he is the best man, but—" To Tinker, at least, it seemed, inasmuch as Lincoln opened his important reaction to Johnson's nomination with "perhaps" and closed it with "but" that he was not the author and promoter of Johnson's candidacy.

Aside from Lincoln's own endorsement on the Nicolay note he clearly stated he did not wish to interfere with the nomination. There is one further testimony which should at least establish Lincoln's attitude toward the prospective nominees. Less than one month after the Baltimore Convention Lincoln had occasion to rebuke John L. Scripps for using his official power to try and defeat Mr. Arnold's nomination to Congress. Lincoln wrote to Scripps, "The correct principle, I think, is that all our friends should have absolute freedom of choice among our friends. My wish, therefore, is that you will do just as you think fit with your own suffrage in the case, and not constrain any of your subordinates to (do) other than (as) he thinks fit with his. This is precisely the rule I inculcated and adhered to on my part, when a certain other nomination, now recently made, was being canvassed for."

In writing this letter to Scripps it seems most likely that the nominations before the convention at Baltimore and his own attitude toward the many candidates for the Vice-Presidency were still fresh in his mind. It is almost unthinkable that Abraham Lincoln would secretly advocate the selection of any one of the several candidates who claimed through their friends to have the sanction of the President.

# LINCOLN LORE

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## SELECTING VICE-PRESIDENTS

The procedure in the selection of the candidate for the vice-presidential nomination at both the Republican and Democratic conventions recently held in Chicago raises again one of the most controversial questions in the political history of Abraham Lincoln. What influence, if any, did the presidential nominee in 1864 exert over the Union Convention at Baltimore in choosing the Vice-Presidential candidate? As organized groups are always more or less interested in precedents when established by a favored exponent of their cause Lincoln's reaction in 1864 becomes an interesting study in the light of recent political procedure.

A bitter name calling argument printed in the *New York Times* in July 1891 between John G. Nicolay, Lincoln's private secretary and Col. A. K. McClure, editor of the *Philadelphia Times* divided students into two schools of thought regarding the interest which Lincoln took with respect to the choice of his second term running mate. More conclusive and certainly more objective than testimonials made pro and con on the subject in 1891, twenty-seven years after failing memory had dulled the vivid happenings of the day, are Lincoln's own words with respect to the incident. These are supplemented by his usual reaction to such parallel political situations where the President was invited to use the influence of his office.

Lincoln by nature was no dictator and displayed no evidence of vaunted ambition, egotism, jealousy, vengeance, self-aggrandizement or other such dictatorial characteristics. In his first message to Congress on December 3, 1861 he stated: "I have been unwilling to go beyond the pressure of necessity in the unusual exercise of power."

In his annual message on December 1, 1862 he stated with relation to foreign states, "We have attempted no propagandism, and acknowledged no revolution. But we have left to every nation the exclusive conduct and management of its own affairs." Lincoln refused to meddle with questions outside his jurisdiction.

In August 1864 after he had already received the presidential nomination he replied to a discouraged follower, "Well, I cannot run the political machine. I have enough on my hands without that. It is the people's business—the election is in their hands."

As late as November 1863 Lincoln replied in a letter to some New York politicians who were seeking Lincoln's endorsement of their candidate: "It is beyond my province to interfere with New York City politics."

The 1864 Union convention composed of a fusion of former Republicans and former Democrats met at Baltimore on June 7. It might be anticipated that with the head of the ticket a former Republican, a former Democrat would make a judicious selection for the Vice-Presidency. Lincoln was pressed for an endorsement of a candidate and on the back of a letter written to him from the convention by John G. Nicolay, Lincoln in his own hand on the day before the convention assembled, wrote these words: "Wish not to interfere about Vice-President. Cannot interfere about platform. Convention must judge for itself."

On June 20 just two weeks after Lincoln had advised by the endorsement that he did not wish to interfere in the nomination of the Vice-President he received a complaint from Philadelphia that the postmaster there was using his "official power" to defeat for renomination the incumbent member of Congress. This remonstrance caused the President to write to the postmaster as follows:

"The correct principle, I think is that all our friends should have absolute freedom of choice among our friends. My wish, therefore, is that you will do just as you think fit with your own suffrage in the case, and not constrain any of your subordinates to do other than he thinks fit with his. This is precisely the rule I inculcated and adhered to on my part when a certain other nomination now recently made was being canvassed for."

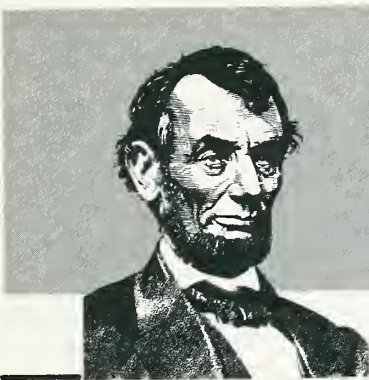
While Lincoln does not state specifically that "the other nomination now recently made" was that of the Vice-Presidential office for 1864, students of Lincoln have associated the episode as the one to which he referred in the above letter.

If Lincoln had given any advice whatever to the many men who claimed the President confided in them and gave each one, as they have implied different choices for the Vice-Presidency we could classify him as a double dealer. He was more apt to respond as he did, in commenting once on which one of two men was best to fill an office: "Let them be placed in the scales solely on what they have done, giving evidence of capacity for civil administration: and let him kick the beam who is found the lightest."

Apparently the Vice-Presidency has always been made a sort of allurements to catch votes or bolster a presidential candidate's strength where fraternally or geographically he is weakest. There can be no question but what Andrew Johnson was selected by the convention as Vice-President to run with Abraham Lincoln because he represented the Democratic element in the Union party and was also from a southern state.

New hazards confront the President of the nation today through all types of rapid transportation which he is almost forced to use and modern explosives which will soon be in the hands of the fanatic and assassin. These impending threats throw a somewhat different aspect on the selection of a Vice-President than it did in the days of horse drawn vehicles when crazed agitators were not lurking at every corner. Yet the selection of a Vice-President, who automatically becomes the head of the nation if disaster visits the White House, is usually made in a hurried session of a few political leaders or even by one man who may assume the dictatorial affront to select for the people their potential leader.

It is hoped that some day the Americans will wake up to the injurious practice of allowing one politician of high rank to select for them the man who may be their next President. The very spirit of Abraham Lincoln cries out against such undemocratic procedure.



# Lincoln Lore

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## Hannibal Hamlin — Lincoln's Vice President (First Term)

Murat Halstead, a correspondent for the Cincinnati *Commercial*, made a circuit of all the national political conventions in 1860, and, after reporting in detail from Chicago the characteristic scenes and memorable events of Abraham Lincoln's nomination for the presidency on the Republican ticket, he made the statement that, "The nomination of (the) Vice-President was not particularly exciting." Hannibal Hamlin of Maine had only one competitor who made any show in the race, and that was Cassius M. Clay of Kentucky. The other candidates were Nathaniel P. Banks, A. H. Reeder, John Hickman, John M. Read, Henry Winter Davis, William L. Dayton and Sam Houston.

If the multitude in the convention hall could have had their way, Clay would have been nominated by acclamation; however, Hamlin possessed the attributes to strengthen the ticket; namely, he was a good friend of William H. Seward ("The fact of the convention, was the defeat of Seward rather than the nomination of Lincoln"), he was geographically distant from Lincoln and was once a Democrat. On the second ballot, Hamlin won the nomination by 367 votes to 86 for Clay and 13 for Hickman.

Clay congratulated Hamlin on his vice-presidential nomination in a letter dated May 22nd and Hamlin replied as follows on May 26th:

"Your very generous note of congratulations of the 22nd came duly to hand. I thank you truly, sincerely for the confidence you so kindly express, and am profoundly grateful to all my friends. Still I say to you in truth, that the position assigned by the Chicago Convention is one which I did not desire. I really would have preferred to have seen it conferred upon yourself. But as a true man, and a friend to the cause, I must not now shrink from it. I hope yet to live to do the Cause some effective good. At all events, I feel confident it shall receive no injury at my hands."

Hamlin's nomination for the vice-presidency was a surprise for him as he had pledged his lieutenants to keep his name entirely out of the convention. The nomination came about largely through the efforts of his political associates at Washington. (See *Lincoln Lore* No. 295, *Honorable*

*Hannibal Hamlin of Hampden, December 3, 1934.*)

A candidate for the presidential nomination, Edward Bates, of St. Louis, Missouri, who later became Lincoln's Attorney General, was criti-



From the Lincoln National Life Foundation

**Hannibal Hamlin**  
Republican candidate for  
Vice-President of the United States

A lithograph published by E. B. & E. C. Kellogg, Hartford, Conn. The names of Hamlin and Lincoln were often curiously associated in the anagram Abra/Hamlin/coln.

cal of the vice-presidential nominee. He recorded the following statement in his diary:

"Mr. Hamlin is not the right person. He has no general popularity, hardly a general reputation, and his geography is wrong. His nomination can add no strength to the ticket . . ."

Hamlin was born on August 27, 1809, the son of Cyrus and Anna (Livermore) Hamlin at Paris Hill, Maine. By profession, a lawyer, he served in the Maine legislature, was elected as a Democrat to Congress in 1842 and re-elected in 1844. He was next chosen to the U. S. Senate for

four years in 1848 and re-elected in 1851. He resigned in 1857 to be inaugurated governor, having been elected as a Republican. He resigned the governorship less than one month afterward, as he had again been selected for a six year term in the United States Senate. He resigned his Senate seat in January, 1861, having been elected vice-president on the Republican ticket with Abraham Lincoln.

Hamlin, while decidedly anti-slavery, regarded the institution beyond the legislative authority of the national government. His views on the political issues of 1860 made him a logical running-mate for Lincoln. As Vice-President during the Civil War, Hamlin presided over the Senate with dignity and ability and was always on cordial terms with the Sixteenth President.

Like Lincoln, he was vigorously opposed to the extension of slavery into new territories. In fact, Hamlin gave as his reasons for changing his party allegiance, the Democratic party's platform in 1856, which incorporated the doctrine "that the flag of the Federal Union, under the constitution of the United States, carries slavery wherever it floats." He stated that: "If this baleful principle be true, then that national ode, which inspires us always as on a battle-field, should be re-written by Drake, and should read:

'Forever float that standard sheet!

Where breathes the foe but

falls before us,

With slavery's soil beneath our feet,  
And slavery's banner streaming  
o'er us.'"

Lincoln, after receiving the presidential nomination, could not recall ever having met Hamlin, and, on July 18, 1860, from Springfield, Illinois, he wrote him as follows:

"It appears to me that you and I ought to be acquainted, and accordingly I write this as a sort of introduction of myself to you. You first entered the Senate during the single term I was a member of the House of Representatives, but I have no recollection that we were introduced. I shall be pleased to receive a line from you."

While Hamlin could definitely recall having heard Lincoln deliver his famous "coat-tail" speech in the House of Representatives, and he

cere thanks for your Emancipation Proclamation. It will stand as the great act of the age. It will prove to be wise in statesmanship as it is patriotic. It will be enthusiastically approved and sustained, and future generations will, as I do, say God bless you for this great and noble act."

Hamlin was to eventually find the office of Vice-President to be a position of frustration — an office of great inherent power, but one of no immediate power whatsoever. He preferred to be on the floor of the Senate with a vote (not just when there was a tie) and patronage to distribute. Hamlin wrote J. Watson Webb on November 29, 1862 that, "he would have declined the vice-presidential nomination had he been at Chicago."

Eventually, Hamlin became identified with the "Radicals" of Congress, and one historian has summarized the decline of his political availability as a Vice-President in 1864 as follows: "If his nomination in 1860 had been due largely to party exigencies, his failure to receive a renomination in 1864 may be attributed to the same cause."

A question which has long fascinated students of Lincoln's administration is whether or not the President played a vital role in Hamlin's defeat for renomination. H. Draper Hunt in his biography, *Hannibal Hamlin Of Maine, Lincoln's First Vice-President*, Syracuse University Press, 1969 stated that: "In my view, logic and the weight of evidence clearly establish that Abraham Lincoln played the leading role in Hannibal Hamlin's downfall in 1864." Hunt further asserted that: "For what the President deemed compelling reasons, Hamlin had to make way for Andrew Johnson." A grandson of the Vice-President, Charles Eugene Hamlin, the author of *The Life And Times Of Hannibal Hamlin*, The Riverside Press, Cambridge, 1899, takes a decidedly opposite view regarding his grandfather's failure to be renominated in 1864.

From the standpoint of excitement, the vice-presidential nominations in the 1864 convention were far more spirited than for the higher office. This was in direct contrast to the contest of 1860. On the first ballot, the vote was 200 for Johnson, 150 for Hamlin and 108 for Daniel S. Dickinson. Before a second roll call could be taken, the switching of votes led to the official result of 494 for Johnson, 27 for Dickinson and 9 for Hamlin.

An old politician had remarked in 1848, when Hannibal Hamlin was elected to the United States Senate, that, "Your name ought to make you president some day." The prophecy would have come true except for the last-minute shift from Hamlin to Andrew Johnson for vice-president in the Baltimore convention of 1864. (See *Lincoln Lore*, No. 684, *The Hamlin vs Johnson Contest*, May 18, 1942.)

After retiring from the vice-presidency, Hamlin served about a year as collector of the Port of Boston, then for two years he served as president

of a railroad (Bangor to Dover), and, finally, he was re-elected to the Senate serving from March 4, 1869 to March 3, 1881. After retiring from the Senate, he served for a brief period as minister to Spain. Eventually, he retired in Bangor and became an elder statesman and one of the last surviving personal friends of President Lincoln.

Senator Henry L. Dawes described Hamlin as, "'a born democrat,' an interesting conversationalist, and an inveterate smoker and card player." Dawes also mentioned as characteristic of the man that he wore "a black swallow-tailed coat, and . . . clung to the old fashioned stock long after it had been discarded by the rest of mankind."

William A. Robinson in his biographical sketch of Hamlin prepared for *The Dictionary Of American Biography*, Volume IV, page 197, describes his physical appearance:

"Hamlin had a stocky, powerful frame and great muscular strength. His complexion was so swarthy that in 1860 the story was successfully circulated among credulous Southerners that he had negro blood."

Hamlin was married twice: on December 10, 1833, to Sarah Jane Emery (died April 17, 1855) and on September 25, 1856, to Ellen Vesta Emery, a half-sister of his first wife. The former vice-president died on July 4, 1891. He was survived by his wife and several children.

Most biographers and students are in agreement that Hamlin's association with Lincoln was the most important phase of his long political life, at least, that is the way it seemed to him.

### Woman's Lib

Editor's Note: The propagandist would hardly research the writings of Abraham Lincoln for quotations to strike a blow for women's liberation. Lincoln was a man's man and he lived in a man's world, although he did occasionally have something nice to say about women. However, modern woman liberationists would likely brand Lincoln for his male chauvinism — an element that undoubtedly existed in his thinking that was typical for his day and age. A few random quotations provide us with some insight into what Lincoln thought about women in general and their problems in particular.

R.G.M.

#### By No Means Excluding Females

"I go for all sharing the privileges of the government, who assist in bearing its burthens (sic). Consequently I go for admitting all whites to the right of suffrage, who pay taxes or bear arms, (by no means excluding females.)"

To the Editor of the  
Sangamo Journal

New Salem, June 13, 1836

#### To Do Right — In All Cases With Women

"I want in all cases to do right, and most particularly so, in all cases with women."

To Mary S. Owens  
Springfield, Aug. 16th, 1837

#### Woman's Work

"... the very first invention was a

joint operation, Eve having shared with Adam in the getting up of the apron. And, indeed, judging from the fact that sewing has come down to our times as 'woman's work' it is very probable she took the leading part; he, perhaps, doing no more than to stand by and thread the needle."

Second Lecture on Discoveries  
and Inventions  
(February 11, 1859)

#### A Business Which I Do Not Understand

"The truth is I have never corresponded much with ladies; and hence I postpone writing letters to them, as a business which I do not understand."

To Mrs. M. J. Green  
Springfield, Sep. 22, 1860

#### God Bless The Women Of America

"... I have never studied the art of paying compliments to women; but I must say that if all that has been said by orators and poets since the creation of the world in praise of woman were applied to the women of America, it would not do them justice for their conduct during this war. I will close by saying God bless the women of America!"

Remarks at Closing of  
Sanitary Fair,  
Washington, March 18, 1864

#### I Would Not Offer Her, Or Any Wife, A Temptation To A Permanent Separation From Her Husband . . .

"... Neither do I personally know Mrs. Hunt (Sallie Ward Hunt, wife of Daniel Hunt). She has, however, from the beginning of the war, been constantly represented to me as an open, and somewhat influential friend of the Union. It has been said to me, (I know not whether truly) that her husband is in the rebel army, that she avows her purpose to not live with him again, and that she refused to see him when she had an opportunity during one of John Morgan's raids into Kentucky. I would not offer her, or any wife, a temptation to a permanent separation from her husband; but if she shall avow that her mind is already, independently and fully made up to such separation, I shall be glad for the property sought by her letter, to be delivered to her, upon her taking the oath of December 8, 1863."

To Whom It May Concern  
Washington, April 11, 1864

#### The Laboring Women In Our Employment, Should Be Paid . . .

"I know not how much is within the legal power of the government in this case; but it is certainly true in equity, that the laboring women in our employment, should be paid at the least as much as they were at the beginning of the war. Will the Secretary of War please have the case fully examined, and so much relief given as can be consistently with the law and the public service."

To Edwin M. Stanton  
July 27, 1864

Not long after the war broke there were assembled in various centers of population throughout the nation conventions of men who ignored political <sup>align</sup> ~~allegements~~ and pledged their support to the preservation of the Union. These assemblies were called Union Conventions. Such a group gathered <sup>at</sup> ~~in~~ Indianapolis on June 18, 1862 "in the State House Grove," with Governor O. P. Morton serving as President.

These assemblies formed a nucleus for the organization of a new political party called the Union Party, which held its first convention in Baltimore in 1864. Because both Republicans and Democrats joined to form the new party it might be assumed that those responsible for the choice of party leaders would give some ~~th~~ought to a plan to have both old parties represented in the two men heading the ticket. Inasmuch as it had been determined to nominate Lincoln, a former Republican, as President, there would be some to suggest that Hamlin, the Vice-President, also of the same political faith, should be replaced by a former Democrat.

In the <sup>summer</sup> fall of 1891 there was a bitter controversy waged through the press as to what part Mr. Lincoln may have played in selection of the Vice-Presidential candidate at Baltimore. The disension<sup>was</sup> brought about by comments on the death of Hamlin which <sup>had</sup> just occurred. The two principles in the discussion were A. K. McClure, editor of the Philadelphia Times, and John G. Nicolay, former private secretary of Mr. Lincoln, who in collaboration with John Hay, had written his biography. The controversy came to a point where McClure in an editorial in the Times on July 11, 1891 said, "It would have been well for both Lincoln's memory and for the country had such a biographer (Nicolay) been drowned when a pup."

Nicolay in reply stated that he "would not allow McClure to retreat in a cloud of vituperation." <sup>McClure charged</sup> ~~Lincoln favored Johnson and thereby alleged that~~ <sup>the President's</sup> ~~personal feelings were for Hamlin's~~ <sup>reminiscence,</sup>

It was McClure's contention that Lincoln favored Andrew Johnson for the Vice-Presidential office while Nicolay maintained he favored Hamlin. <sup>The President's personal feelings were for Hamlin's re-nomination.</sup> The result of the controversy ~~was that~~ some newspaper editors concluded that Lincoln had been guilty of double dealing, <sup>or</sup> ~~as one person put it, that~~ <sup>had</sup> Lincoln was "engaged in a double-face conspiracy against his friend and associate," Hannibal Hamlin.

It was not until after the death of Hamlin that the controversy about Lincoln's attitude toward the Vice-President in the 1864 campaign became a question of public debate. The statement made by John G. Nicolay that Lincoln's "personal feelings were for Hamlin's re-nomination" brought the subject forth for general discussion.

If Butler had accepted ~~he~~ would have measured up to expectation in three particulars at least, he was a famous general, a New Englander, and a Democrat. He failed in one qualification which <sup>however</sup> ~~was~~ more or less nullified by the determination of Hamlin to stay in the race, ~~so~~ <sup>then</sup> the sectional question of <sup>a</sup> ~~another~~ candidates availability <sup>then</sup> shifted from New England to the South. This brought into the limelight Andrew Johnson of Tennessee, who became the successful contestant against Hamlin.

McClellan's bid for the Presidency on the Democratic ticket seemed to make it almost imperative that there should be on the Union ticket some well-known military officer and the names of Generals Butler, Dix, Logan and Sickels were suggested.

Memories of the 1860 campaign apparently were refreshed, for when Cameron who took the initiative in the Butler interview, was unsuccessful, the Seward interests sponsored by Thurlow Weed, came to the front with their nominee from the Border States and championed the election of Johnson.

Isaac Jenkins in a speech made before the Commercial Club at Richmond Ind stated that with Senator Kilgore he "spent an hour with Lincoln the afternoon before the convention, and Lincoln expressed to him that he did not think it was his place to suggest to the convention who should be nominated for Vice President, and he declared emphatically, that he would take no hand in it."

